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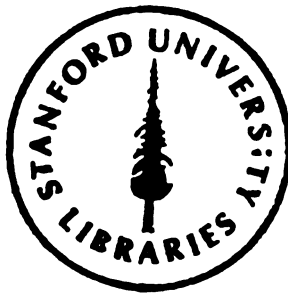
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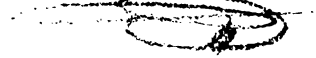
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RETROSPECTS

WILLIAM KNIGHT



A. J. With



RETROSPECTS

RETROSPECTS

BY

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PREFACE

IN these *Retrospects* no attempt is made to trace the full career, or describe the varied work, of those whose names occur in them. Neither finished portraiture, nor detailed biography, is aimed at. Only a few *præterita*, regarding some notable English men and women of last century—which would otherwise have been unrecorded—are brought together, and set down in a sort of miscellany. It has been prepared for the sake of those who now care for, and others who may yet be interested in, the memory and the words of those included in it. The majority are well-known persons; and 'Memoirs,' 'Lives,' 'Journals,' 'Letters,' or slighter 'Sketches' of several of them—the work of competent and accredited authors—now exist. The ground thus occupied is not retraversed by me; and the chief interest of the book will be found in Letters hitherto unpublished and unknown, which cast light on the character of their writers, in Anecdotes and Reminiscences, as well as fragments of unrecorded Conversations, along with the impressions made on those who heard and have preserved them.

Those who are described, whose *dicta* are given, or whose letters and conversations are reported, were all

personal acquaintances. In one or two cases our meetings were only occasional; but with the majority my intercourse was frequent, sometimes continuous, and our correspondence extended over many consecutive years.

I now regret that I did not, except in rare cases, write down at the time of hearing them the literary and social judgments, the criticism of men and things, and the casual sayings of these men (all now deceased), as I did in the *Colloquia Peripatetica* of John Duncan, and in the case of one or two whose names occur in *Some Nineteenth Century Scotsmen*. Unfortunately I trusted to what might enter, and be retained in, the storehouses of memory; but after the lapse of years many things preserved in these crypts of necessity become dim. Others, however—and these the most important ones—now stand out all the clearer on the horizon, and come back with photographic distinctness to the inward eye; so that I need not say, in the words of a poet, some of whose unpublished letters will be found in these pages—

I seem left alive
Like a sea-jelly weak on Patmos strand,
To tell dry sea-beach gazers how it fared
When there was mid-sea, and the mighty things.

It has been described as the best of all kinds of education for men or women to live under the influence of characters that are strong, original, exalted, and benign; that are many-sided, fertile-minded, and ideal. There is truth in the remark. When so large a part of every life has to be spent in a prosaic world of details, where mere routine becomes unfruitful if not fettering,

and begets commonplace if it is not barren of result, the privilege of occasional converse with those who live in the realm of ideality, whence they step out to greet and to cheer the toilers in the actual, is great. To meet these higher men and higher women, to hear them speak, and to see how an ideal character can wreath itself with, and unveil itself through, the hindrances of the actual is perhaps the surest way of getting to know our Human Nature at its best. The next, and probably an easier, way is to learn of their conversation, their views of things, their ideas of 'the true, the beautiful, and the good' through books; if those books are a veracious record by those who wrote of what they know, and of experiences in which they have themselves taken part. It is for this, among other reasons, that the following pages have been written.

They may contain some materials for future criticism, but I nowhere assume the *rôle* of critic, which is so easy to take up, and so unproductive when laid down. Posterity is not much the wiser if it merely gets to know the estimates of distinguished people, formed by those who had an opportunity of meeting them. Hence it is that 'critical biographies' are as a rule so disappointing and useless, sometimes even pernicious. What is posterity the better for knowing the verdict of A, B, and C upon 'the great of old,' whose spirits still 'rule us from their urns'; more especially when there is much more of the A, B, and C, the new critics, than of the departed sage or seer in the books which the former write? What it surely needs much more is to have an

adequate and trustworthy re-presentation of the past, and new pictures of the men and women—these ‘great of old’—as in a mirror, so that the living may be able to realise the dead as they lived and moved and had their being in the flesh.

To those who wish to have the past revived for them, and to be revived by it, the perusal or the study of such an admirable work as our *Dictionary of National Biography* will not wholly suffice. That work has obtained a unique and assured place in the literature of England, and it must be consulted by everyone who wishes accurately to know the great landmarks of History in the light of Biography. But those now referred to will receive, perhaps, quite as powerful an influence from a series of visits to our great National Portrait Galleries. I do not refer to the excellent one at Trafalgar Square, but to those numerous *literary* Galleries which a competent reader may enter at any time, and traverse at will. Not that to the Dictionary on the one hand, or the Portrait Gallery on the other, an inferior position can be assigned; but they must be supplemented. I remember a friend once asking me to meet him next day at the Dictionary of National Biography! He meant the National Portrait Gallery; but I thought his mistake a happy one, and the parallel between the two so just and apposite that I suggested, should he ever dine with his fellow-contributors to our noble Dictionary, he should see that the chief toast of the evening was proposed as that of ‘Our National Portrait Gallery’!

But however accurate relevant and full, yet severely concise, the Dictionary articles are to the scholar, to the majority of readers they are—and are only meant to be—a dry epitome of facts. While more useful to posterity, and more likely to live, than the ordinary 'Memoir' or 'Autobiography'—unless the latter be a work of genius—they have not the same interest to contemporaries; and to them Reminiscences that are accurate as well as many-sided, even if a few things intrinsically trivial be taken up along with the more important ones, will be welcomed at least for a time. We all wish to know a good deal about our recent contemporaries which will not interest a later generation, and which it may gladly forget. Such records must of necessity contain some local colourings; but time is needed for the removal of these, and the substitution of a clearer light.

As I have said, it is my aim not to repeat what has been already written, or to walk over well-trodden ground. Even in the case of such a friend as James Martineau—several of whose letters to me have been published in his *Life and Letters* and in *Inter Amicos*¹—I have included only those as yet unpublished, except in two instances, where they appear with *addenda* previously omitted. In the case of Browning's letters, which were sent to Mrs. Sutherland Orr when she was writing the poet's life, but few of which she used, they are now printed nearly *in extenso*.

¹ The originals of the 109 letters I received from him are now at Manchester College, Oxford.

There is a well-known temptation to which every recorder of conversation is exposed, which the modern 'interviewer' has intensified, and to which many of the interviewed succumb. It is to add to, or embellish, the reports that are given; so that the first question to which almost every reader of 'Reminiscences' desires an answer is the obvious one—'Are these things true? Are the reports authentic? Is the chronicle veracious throughout, or at least as accurate as that through which Boswell has transmitted to us the *dicta* of Dr. Johnson?' In the case of the greatest recorder of Dialogue, no one can tell how much is a literal transcript, and how much is due to the idealisation of the writer; and in a case so supreme, when we are in the company of Socrates and Plato, we really do not need to know.¹ But, with reference to the conversations of lesser men recorded by modern writers, the case is very different, and a general principle may easily be reached.

There is no doubt that,

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
We summon up remembrance of things past,

imagination should be almost dormant, while memory should be 'distinct and clear.' In such circumstances alone can the office of recorder be permissible, and the result trustworthy. But many of our contemporary books and magazines contain accounts of lengthy interviews with distinguished people, in which it is obvious even to the un-initiate that the recorder has coloured

¹ We are profoundly grateful that there were no stenographers at Athens, and no typewriters.

his report, idealised his subject, invented details, and allowed imagination to work alongside of memory in producing the result he gives us. To this, perhaps as much as to anything else, is due the truth of the maxim that 'there are more false facts than false theories abroad in the world.'

So far as I am concerned, however, the reports given in these pages, and to be continued in subsequent ones, are not only not idealised, but are perhaps ultra-realistic. I lack the power of recasting or reconstructing a conversation out of a minimum of actual fact. In no instance is an attempt made to reproduce a lengthened conversation with those whose letters are printed. Many detached remarks are given, but no continuous discourse or discussion. In the case of Mr. Ruskin, however—a retrospect of whom will appear in my Second Series—I had the help of another, who accompanied me in one of my visits to Brantwood, and who has reproduced a longish conversation almost in its entirety.

I once listened to the following desultory conversation in a railway carriage, where so many curious confidences are at times revealed by loquacious people. After a long discussion on literary matters and biographical anecdotes, one traveller said, 'But take Mr. ——. He didn't *record* all these sayings about the poet —; he *invented* them, and must have done so.' 'I beg your pardon,' was the rejoinder, 'Mr. — is incapable of invention. He is as true a recorder of actual facts as anyone who lives.' 'Well, well,' was the reply, 'I don't believe in him a bit, as a recorder; but I accept

his picturesque upbuildings. He had to make his book a readable one, and his exaggerations are at any rate much better than those of the autobiographic egotist, who gives to the world a chronicle of his own dyspepsia.' 'But don't you prefer the veracious record of a great man's thoughts given us by his friends rather than by himself?' 'Yes,' was the rejoinder; 'but I wish still more to read his own letters, or the memoranda he has left us.'

It is now many years since these *Retrospects* were begun, and when an early chapter was printed—under the present title, which was then copyrighted—I hoped to be able to finish them soon. Many circumstances have prevented the completion of the First Series till now. I fear I cannot apply to myself the consolation which Browning gave to all the world in his sentence, 'Works done least rapidly, Art more cherishes'; but at any rate the delay has enabled me to include in this volume—and will further enable me to include in its sequel—letters and reminiscences of some writers, both English and American, which would otherwise have been left out.

It will be seen that the sketches differ in one important respect. In the case of Carlyle, anecdote and reminiscence preponderate; in the case of Browning, Martineau, and Stanley, these are given along with the letters which they wrote; while in others, such as those of Shorthouse, Davies, Smetham, and Elwin, their letters are the chief interest throughout.

What I have written is not addressed to those 'who

run to read,' and much of it may be 'caviare to the general.' I recall, however, a remark written somewhere by Carlyle, and which I heard him repeat with variations one evening at Cheyne Row in his sonorous musical monotone: 'Is a thing nothing because the Morning Papers have not chronicled it? And can a nothing be made a something by ever-so-much babblement of it there?'

Reminiscences of and letters from Ruskin, Cardinal Newman, George Frederick Watts, James Russell Lowell, Lords Selborne and Coleridge, Herbert Spencer, Lecky, Henry Sidgwick, Roden Noel, Dora Greenwell, Aubrey de Vere, the late Master of Balliol, Sir John Seeley, Leslie Stephen, William Morris, Dante Rossetti, Mrs. Oliphant, and many others will be found in my Second Series.

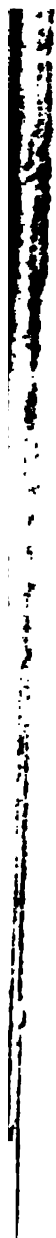
What is writ is writ; would it were worthier.

It may be of use to a few, but only for a time. There is no such thing as finality in the estimates of the dead, and fresh material is sure to be ingathered in reference to those whose words and deeds are recorded here. It would be well to have it collected soon, as it is only for a brief period that our existing records will be either available or needful.

We pass; the path that each man trod
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds;
What fame is left for human deeds
In endless age? It rests with God.

W. K.

September 1904.



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RETROSPECTS

THOMAS CARLYLE

It is more than forty years since I first met Carlyle, the sage of Chelsea. It was at that delightful home of happy memories—Linlathen House in Forfarshire—where Thomas Erskine used to gather round him, and ask his friends to meet, such men as Carlyle, Maurice, Kingsley, Arthur Stanley, McLeod Campbell, Bishop Ewing, and other kindred spirits. We sat in the house, or walked in the grounds and by the sea-coast at Monifieth, while our genial Socrates talked in his marvellous way of many persons and things; his conversation being often a continued series of meteoric flashes, splendours of the imagination blending with rapier thrusts of logic, incisive criticism of contemporary men, and discursive commentary on all things human and divine.

One warm autumn afternoon we were sitting under the shade of a noble tree, when a man whom I knew slightly came up on his way to the house, and asked to be presented to 'his oracle,' as he put it. So soon as the formal introduction was over, Carlyle said to him,

L

B

‘ Well, Sir ! and where in the universe are *you* working ? ’
The grip of the question so astonished the stranger that he could give no coherent answer, and soon departed.

There was a different tone in Carlyle's talk when he was a guest at Linlathen from what it was in his own London home. Not that there was the smallest inconsistency between them ; but, in his friend's house in the north, with its atmosphere of radiant graciousness, he seemed more full of reverence. He was impressed, to a larger extent perhaps than others were, by the genial dignity of our host and the elevation of his character, which so guided conversation that it was almost invariably directed into channels where the current flowed clear, and strong, and bright. There were few wayward digressions in the talk of the breakfast or dinner table at Linlathen. It was not that any subject was *taboo*, and the variety of topics introduced was remarkable ; but the trivial and the gossip had not time to live, and what was ‘ of the earth, earthy,’ was extinguished in the most natural manner. The social atmosphere of that household made weak natures strong, and noble ones nobler for the time being. And the effect of Erskine's presence on Carlyle was that the conversation of the latter, while he was a guest, became more many-sided, joyous, and iridescent.

For some years after first meeting him in Forfarshire I had the pleasure of spending occasional hours at Carlyle's house in Cheyne Row ; and it is of that London home of his that the majority of those who knew him have the most abiding memories. When the inspired

mood was his, he used to discourse at large, his face—with the small red apple in the cheek, which remained rosy till his latest year—becoming more eloquently expressive as the monologue went on; and his words sometimes as musical ‘as the voice of many waters.’ I have heard him pour forth a continuous stream of impassioned declamation for more than an hour at a time; and so keen were his characterisations, so felicitous his arrow-shots of criticism, so rich his satire, so intense his patriotic sympathy with all that belonged to national life and character, that no listener could wish the wonderful utterance to cease. The only desire possible was that Carlyle should have had some one associated with him, resembling Boswell in his relation to Johnson. I once tried to write out a conversation of his at some length, but in vain. It was such a torrent of felicitous criticism—with fireworks of the fancy and imagination combined—that no one but a shorthand reporter could have taken it down; and if anyone had ventured to do so in his presence, the conversation would have either ceased or changed. Dean Stanley, however, once read to me at Westminster his memoranda of a long conversation he had with Carlyle, extending to more than forty pages of a note-book, which reproduced the Socratic talker in so realistic a fashion that it is a great loss to posterity that the MS. has disappeared. I asked three men who perhaps knew the Dean best, and who were successively asked to write his life—Sir George Grove, Theodore Walrond, and Dean Bradley—if they had ever seen it. They had not, and no trace of it now survives.

I have only one thing to record of Mrs. Carlyle. I had been spending the afternoon with her husband in the upper room—half drawing-room, half library—and we came down to the dining-room to smoke. Carlyle used then to keep a collection of long churchwarden pipes at the corner of this room by the fire; and when a visitor who smoked came in, he would hand him one with the remark 'See if it has got breath, Sir' (meaning, was the pipe-stem clear to draw the smoke from the bowl). We were sitting in the 'golden silence' he loved so much, and yet ignored so often, when Mrs. Carlyle entered. I was struck by her gracious air. That afternoon it was most gracious. She was preparing tea, when her husband made a disparaging remark on one of our modern writers; and she said, with the utmost *naïveté*, 'Oh, Tom, you're so eccentric.' 'Yes' exclaimed—I may say growled—her husband; 'Yes, *but can you find my centre!*'

Carlyle was often unjust to his contemporaries, especially to Darwin, and to the work and aim of those who led the band in the great scientific renaissance of the nineteenth century. He was once speaking about Darwin, in the broad Scottish dialect into which he often relapsed when conversing with a Scotsman. He said: 'I think that they scienteefic men must expect God Almighty to come to them some fine mornin, and gie them a patent to make a warld; they seem sae curious to know how this one was made.' I humbly ventured to say that I thought him unjust to Darwin, and was trying to explain what I considered the chief point in

Darwin's magnificent scientific theory. He at once interposed: 'Maister Darwin is no better than John Mull' [Mill] 'or Maister Herbert Spencer: they're a' *magneeficent asses!*' We had been talking of Mill and Herbert Spencer beforehand. It was reported to him that, when Mill was asked what he thought of a certain political problem, he replied, 'Well, this is my opinion [giving it in a sentence]; but, you see, I must consult my constituents.' Carlyle said, 'Did John Mull say *that*? a wake cratur, John Mull; a varra wake cratur!'

He asked me much about what was going on in the North, about Scottish life and character; and was curious to know whether the religious customs of his youth continued among the peasantry. 'Do the Scotch folk keep up the guid auld practice of family-worship?' I said I thought it less common than it used to be. He replied, 'So much the worse for Scotland. I remember, in my young days, when you could hear in every cottage in Ecclefechan—aye and even in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh—in the early morning or late evening some psalm-singing, and the reading of the Book.' He then lapsed into a long and somewhat fantastic praise of Calvinism; and when I suggested that there might be another side to the question, he said sternly—'*There is no other side.* It's Calvinism that makes heroes. It made Oliver, and there never was a greater hero than Oliver.' It was impossible for a youth to discuss the merits of Cromwell with his arch-apologist!

He used to be terribly plagued by lion-hunters,

autograph-collectors, and interviewers. I remember his once telling me that an American had called, and asked to see him. He was informed by a servant that Mr. Carlyle was dining. 'Oh but I *must* see him,' was the reply; 'I have come all the way from New York to do so.' He was asked to call at another time; but he would neither go away, nor promise to return. So Carlyle rose from dinner, went to the door, and said to the stranger, 'Well, sir, and what can I do for you?' The reply was, 'Mr. Carlyle, I have just come from New York, and I want to send to the — newspaper your opinions of our civil war, and of a book upon it which has just appeared across the water.' Carlyle said to me, 'I'm not accustomed to do rude things, and I try to "suffer fools gladly," but I just *slammed the door* in that fellow's face.'

There are delightful stories of his visits to Fifeshire — when he came as the honoured guest of his old friend, Provost Swan of Kirkcaldy — which I tried (many years ago) to induce Mr. Froude to incorporate in his 'Reminiscences.' I was indebted to Mr. Swan for them. One was the story of his conducting family worship one night, by his own request, in the Provost's house, and reading aloud one half of the Book of Job, till all the domestic servants had fallen asleep; and apologising for it afterwards, 'because I had not read that Eliphaz the Temanite for a long time, and he was varra interesting.' Another was his visit to the room — then a factory-store — in which, as a young man, he had taught mathematics and Latin at Kirkcaldy; when he looked round, and said, 'Aye, there's where — sat, and

there's where Miss —— sat, and this is the room in which I tried to teach those boys and girls Latin and Mathematics. Dear me, what a bad teacher I must have been ! How strange it all is to me now !' He was taken to see a new Board School in the *Lang Toon*. The teacher, apprised beforehand of the visit, had arranged that the pupils would sing some hymns in honour of it. Carlyle listened, and then said, 'But can't ye sing some of Robbie Burns's sangs ?' The teacher had to tell him that he feared they could not. Then, lifting up his hands, he said, 'Oh ! Scotland, Scotland ! and has it come to this, that yer bairns canna sing Robbie Burns's sangs !'

There had been an exposure in the newspapers of some great scandal in the matter of Government contracts ; bad work, entailing disaster, and shoddy supplies, leading to loss of life. I think it was certain army-contracts for the supply of shoes, sent out to our soldiers in the Crimea ; although it happened half a dozen years before I heard his version of it. Carlyle told the story, and said, 'I think we need some Hebrew prophet to come amongst us, to rend his clothes, and put on sackcloth, and scatter ashes, and go up and down in this great Babylon of ours, and cry aloud, "Oh ye manufacturers of shoddy, either some of you must die for this, or I must die for you."'

Carlyle once gave to Mr. Blunt, the late rector of Chelsea, some recollections of his childhood, which that kind rector handed on to me. Speaking of the pious care of his mother, and the lessons she had taught him,

he said that he was once left alone on a cold snowy day to take care of the cottage, while his parents had gone to the nearest market town to buy provisions. A miserable half-starved beggar came to the door, and his heart was at once touched by the sight of such abject misery. 'I had saved up,' said Carlyle, 'in a small earthen thrift-pot all the pennies that had been given to me, and kept it safely on the high shelf over the fireplace: and I well remember climbing up, and getting it down, and breaking it open that I might give all its contents to the poor wretch.' He added, 'I never knew before what the joy of heaven must be.' Thus early at any rate did the boy learn that it was 'more blessed to give than to receive.'

A somewhat curious reminiscence is of Carlyle's one interview with her late gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. It was one of Dean Stanley's delightful audacities that he effected an interview between Carlyle and the Queen. On that occasion he collected several living specimens of genius, all of whom he thought should be introduced to her Majesty. The meeting was at the Deanery of Westminster. Soon afterwards, as Carlyle was plodding his solitary way towards Cheyne Row, Mr. Blunt made up to him, and said, 'What did you think of the Queen, Mr. Carlyle?' 'Well,' he replied, 'no one could see her without perceiving that she was the greatest Lady in the land. She came into the room with such a grace as no other lady ever had.' 'And how did you get on with her?' 'Ah! well, I don't know. I said to her that I was an old man, and would she permit me to sit

down? I think she didn't quite like it; but I could not stand up in that room, like a pump-handle, just to be pumped out.' 'But what did she say to you?' 'Well, she praised my country and its people very much. I felt sure she would do that, and I said, "Well, they are just like other folks, neither better nor worse than the rest of your Majesty's subjects." 'Do you think she had read any of your books, Mr. Carlyle?' 'No, I don't suppose she had read much of anyone's books. I don't think she was a great reader. She had many more important things to do than reading anyone's books.' From this account of the conversation by Carlyle himself, Mr. Blunt gathered that it had been a short one; and he heard afterwards that the good Dean—who had been watching the interview—saw that things were not progressing very easily, and so he brought up some other of his live specimens of genius, and released Carlyle from what was evidently a somewhat strained position. Although little progress had been made, the old man was genuinely and deeply impressed by the majestic grace of the Queen, unequalled by that of any other lady he had seen, and he was a good judge of character. Some time afterwards, Mr. Blunt asked Dean Stanley how things had gone on at the interview. He only laughed and shook his head; as though the remembrance was not quite satisfactory. I may add that Carlyle never did justice to Stanley, or to his party in the Church of England. He once said in sardonic fashion, 'Eh, the Dean! he's a man who just gets drunk on toast and water!'

Talking of Gladstone and Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield) both of whom he rather disliked—Gladstone for his verbosity, and Disraeli for the tinsel which was round about him—he said, ‘I don’t know that Dizzy has got a conscience. Gladdy *has* a conscience, but he just turns it any way he has a stomach to, and immediately thinks it a call from God! Ha! ha! ha!’

Of the Duke of Wellington he said: ‘I had never heard the Duke speak, and I thought I would like to hear him: there’s a sort of physiognomy in a man’s voice, you know. I got an order for the House of Lords, and I went in. Brougham spoke for a long time, but he was just like a hurdy-gurdy wound up. On he went, but never a bit did I know what he was speaking about. Then some others got up, and talked away, without throwing any light on the subject. Presently the Duke got up. He spoke in short disjointed sentences, and only for about ten minutes; but he made the whole thing as clear as daylight. It was just like a man scratching a thing out on the wall—so clear it was.’

I have already quoted what he said to me about John Stuart Mill. The following was said to a Scots friend: ‘John Mull wrote a book on *Leeberty*. What is there to say about it? I can think what I like, and say what I like, and do what I like: and no one can prevent me. What more leeberty do I need, or want? Whoo-oo!’

Of De Quincey he said, ‘The first time I met De Quincey I thought he was the most beautiful talker I had ever listened to. When he went away, I said to myself

"I would just like to have that man in a box, and bring him out whenever I wanted. Ha ! ha ! ha !""

In the following story the humour did not compensate for the extraordinary anti-scientific bias. Dining at Lord Ashburton's, soon after Darwin's doctrine of *pangeneses* was published, the conversation turned to this subject. After talk had gone on for some time, Carlyle—who had up to then kept silence—broke in thus: 'Darwin says, God made man a little higher than the tadpoles. I prefer David's version of it, that He made him a little lower than the angels.'

From 1860 onwards his appearance in the streets of London was that of a countryman who had entirely disregarded appearances, and only consulted comfort. He was constantly seen walking along the Chelsea streets, or journeying in an omnibus, but he very seldom took notice of persons or things. The following will recall an earlier story: 'Excuse me, Sir,' said an American—who had been lingering for some time in the vicinity of Cheyne Row, in order if possible to see Carlyle come out of his house—'excuse me looking at you, Sir, for I have travelled four thousand miles to do so.' 'Look on, man,' said Carlyle. 'It will do me no harm, and you no good.' And so saying, he went slowly on his solitary walk.

On receiving a book recording the talk of an old teacher of his correspondent he said: 'I see here a valiant and valorous man, pursuing his way in the mirk, again with his foot on the rock, or thinking that it is there; his eye mostly turned to the light. It's clear

that he can't put up with shams, or makeshifts, in the matter of belief; and that's a great thing when you are on the roadway, even if there are no guide-posts.' Of another volume he sent to me this verdict in 1870: 'I find in this little book many traces of serious and vigorous original thought, the like of which is always valuable and interesting to serious persons, in whatsoever dialect it runs.'

On one occasion a visitor had been praising Newman's *Apologia* for its acumen, its subtlety and remorseless logic. 'Kingsley,' said Carlyle, 'had the best of the argument'; and he added, 'John Henry Newman is a very clever man, but he has got some palpable mendacities in his intellect, and he seems to me to say, "With these I will face the Eternal."' He was altogether unjust to Newman.

His conversation was often in short swallow-flights, and was strangely digressive; all the more because of that it would come round and round again, without being repetition, to what was fundamental in human nature. He had a vast fund of occasionally misdirected sympathy, and an equally vast one of antipathy; but his antipathetic tendency was towards the thousands whom he described as 'mostly fools,' and the shafts of his satire were turned against the evils and the tumults of our time. The wrongs under which humanity suffers affected him acutely, and led to a savage denunciation of all oppressors. But the storm of his wrath did not fall on one class only. Wherever tyranny or iniquity met his eye, the old Hebraic wrath against evil seemed to

burst forth from him. It was *sæva indignatio*, impetuous, absorbing, consuming. Underneath even his calmest moods there was always the possibility of a volcanic outburst against untruth of any kind, while he had the finest eye of appreciation for merit everywhere. One always felt that the lightning of his wrath, and the loud thunder of his invective, proceeded from a really gentle and tender spirit. But his all-dominant admiration for strength, for robustness of fibre, moral grit, and tenacity of purpose often obscured this. It is a calumny to say that Carlyle identified might with right. In his books, and in all his talk, he differentiated them, to use Jeremy Collier's phrase, 'by the whole diameter of being'; but he held that they coincided in the long run. It was because Might was a revelation of Law and Order, alike in cosmic force and Bismarckian policy, that he habitually glorified strength. 'Isn't Right omnipotent?' he once said. The reply was, 'Always in the long run, but it often takes time, for, as one has said,

Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small.'¹

'Yes, yes,' he answered, 'but it's the end I look to, the conclusion of the whole matter, which is this, that these two things are one, or are to be so in time.'

As an illustration of the way in which he passed rapidly from theme to theme, on the day when he talked of the *Apologia*, he suddenly went aside to glorify a life

¹ See the *Sinnegedichte* of Friedrich von Logau (1650), translated by Longfellow.

of toil. He insisted on the need of steady 'rhythmic drill' for all our peasantry and operative workers. He said he had himself toiled in a sort of groove all his life, but it was a wholesome one. It had light in it, and good air; and he thanked Heaven that he had been compelled to work in it. He said, 'I once thought that if a blessed millennium of work set in, hard homely honest work for all, everyone might be able to live on a penny a day. I don't think that now. It was a dream of my youth.' At another time he said, 'I've sometimes thought that if most of the copies of the Bible were burnt, or all of them buried for a time, and that then a reprinting of it took place, after people had tried to get on with miserable substitutes, there would be a universal demand for it *all the world over*. But now it is so caricatured and transmogrified by critics and interpreters—each with his own "note of doctrine," his own egotism—that a plain honest man cannot get at its meaning; that is, if he pays heed to the scribes, who are blind leaders of the blind. But, Sir, that book is still the oracle of the world. I said the other day to a fellow who was parading its old-fashionedness, "What ails ye at the Bible? It's the best book that ever was, or is, however it came to be written; and that's what neither you nor I can fathom just now." I don't think it's easily found out. But, bless me, why shouldn't people try? They're trying to find out who wrote Homer; and, if they succeed with the *Iliad*, why shouldn't they find out who wrote Genesis, or Isaiah?'

Carlyle did not often talk of the *ultima* of belief;

but when he did, it was obvious that to him—as to the Jews of old—the essence or principle at the root of all things was both dark and bright, unknown and yet well-known, inscrutable in essence but evidenced by its outcome. Matter had not created mind, although it mirrored it; but, after all our sounding in the depths, the unknown and unknowable was as certain as the known.

However, he once said, ‘I have for a long time given up the argle-bargle of metaphysics, with its jargonings, and hair-splittings, and general dreariness. It’s a big desert. I once cared for it, and wandered in it awhile; but ey, mon, it’s an awfu’ obscure country. Have you been in it?’ I said, ‘Not professionally,¹ but to me it is the radical quarter, whence comes all our knowledge of other things.’ ‘What do you say? The radical quarter! Well, that’s a good phrase, but it’s not true, as regards metaphysics and the metaphysicians. They argle-bargle, I say; they chatter, I say; and they’re all “voices crying in the wilderness,” *voces et præterea nihil*.’ Here I ventured to interpose, and said that one of the chief uses of Philosophy was to compel us to think ‘clare et distincte,’ as Descartes put it, and to define our words. He then said he could make some exceptions, and that he preferred the German metaphysics to all the rest. He spoke of Kant with enthusiasm, ‘the grand modern Stoic,’ and with almost equal regard of ‘that great good man Fichte,’ but not of his system. ‘Now don’t you get

¹ This was six years before I became a University professor of Philosophy.

more from Goethe than from Kant, and from Schiller than from Fichte, and from Jean Paul than from Schelling?' 'No,' I said, 'I don't. Others may; but, when we are in search of first principles, we must surely go to the philosophers who are at the fountain-head. Was not Socrates greater than any "literary man"?' 'Well, well,' he replied 'it may be so; but your "metaphysics" have no more any interest for me.'

'By the way there was a great strong countryman of yours, of ours I should say, who came up here to work as I did, and worked well, John Downes. I think he edited your *Encyclopædia Britannica* in Edinburgh.' 'Sub-edited it,' I replied, 'which was a harder task than to edit it.' 'Well,' he said, 'that good man came to see me. I thought him as fine a sample of Scotland as I had seen since I left it. He was from the south country, from Wigtonshire I think. He was one of Nature's self-sown modest gentlemen.' 'But,' I replied, 'he was a philosopher, a metaphysician. His best work for the *Encyclopædia* was on Philosophy, on Spinoza &c. Do you know he has passed away?' He paused, and looked straight out of his wonderfully clear eye, and said, 'Is it so?' 'Yes, and he has left a widow.' 'Who is looking after her?' he asked. I said, 'A distant relative of your own, Mr. Gavin Carlyle, a Presbyterian minister in Town.' 'I am glad of that, I am glad of that. She will be well cared for.'

At Cheyne Row I met several of Carlyle's friends, Ruskin amongst them; and on one occasion, when he and the Provost of Kirkcaldy, Mr. Patrick Swan, were

there, as we were about to leave, Ruskin asked us to accompany him in his carriage, if our abodes lay on his way, as the evening was wet. I remember only one thing that happened. Mr. Swan said to Ruskin, 'Do you think that our friend is all safe for the future?' 'What do you mean?' said Ruskin. 'I mean safe when he dies, with all these opinions of his.' 'I think, Mr. Swan,' was Ruskin's reply, 'we had better leave that to God Almighty.'

I am not sure that the following stories have found their way into print. Carlyle had his shoes made at Ecclefechan, because he had failed to be adequately 'fitted' in London. On one occasion his Dumfries-shire supply fell short, and he had to take what he could get from a local tradesman. He found them satisfactory, and wrote and signed a letter to the Chelsea shopman in which he said that he had at last found a good honest workman. The shoemaker lost no time in framing the letter, and hanging it up in his window. It was said to have brought him some patronage.

Another story is this: Carlyle was visiting the Ashburtons, when the Bishop of Oxford—Samuel Wilberforce—was also a guest. They both enjoyed exercise on horseback, and on one occasion had an afternoon ride together, when mist came on and made it difficult to progress. When they returned Lady Ashburton inquired where they had been and what they had done. 'Oh!' said the Bishop, 'we were enveloped in mist. Mr. Carlyle and I were like the spectres on the Brocken, Faust and Mephistopheles.'

Whereupon Carlyle curtly interjected: 'And which was which?'

I owe the following to the late Rector of Chelsea: 'While Carlyle was writing the greater part of his *Frederick the Great*, he used to ride almost daily into the country, or in one of the parks. About the time when he finished that great work he gave up riding, having ridden, as he said, some 20,000 miles, and getting weary of the trouble of it. So he turned his horse over to me, not liking to sell it, as it had been given him by Lady Ashburton. Thus "*Frederick the Great*," as we called the quadruped, came round to the Rectory stables, which were close at hand; and I took charge of him, on the understanding that if Carlyle ever wished to ride him he was to let my man know, and he could bring the horse round. It had been a capital hack; but alas! it had fallen into evil habits, through the influence of its "absent-minded" master. Along certain turnings and streets it utterly refused to proceed; and having been allowed always to have its own way, it resented any difference of opinion between itself and its rider. Those who had often seen Carlyle riding across Clapham Common frequently saw the horse grazing along the edge of the road, with the reins hanging loose on its neck; and Carlyle sitting deep in meditation, until "*Frederick the Great*" was persuaded to move on. I forget,' says Mr. Blunt, 'how long I kept the horse; but I remember that it was ultimately sent back to Lady Ashburton, to enjoy an honourable and of life in a comfortable paddock.'

Our common physician-friend, Dr. Maclagan, wrote to me thus: 'My personal experience of Carlyle was this. He was the most courteous man I ever met. Never once did that old man fail to rise up to receive me, nor allow me to leave his room without walking to the door with me, while he had strength to do so. After death all the ruggedness and the wrinkles disappeared from his face. But for the beard, it was like that of a woman, so delicately and beautifully moulded it was.'

I think that there were more interesting English conversationalists than Carlyle in the nineteenth century—men who were not autocratic monopolists of talk, or so intensely dominant that, when the torrent-rush commenced, they did not understand the gracious gift of 'give and take' (and some of these will be referred to in another section of this book). Nevertheless, in his best hours of colloquial oratory and controversial lampooning, Carlyle was absolutely supreme; so opulent, as already said, in his use of adjectives, so varied in the art of bringing out of his treasury incisive nouns, so trenchant in his use of adverbs, so picturesque in all his sentences, and home-thrusting in his satire and his verdicts. But with all this multitudinous and at times dazzling brilliance, there was also a (perhaps unconscious) self-assertion which took the form of a desire for deference. I never felt that he spoke—as Tennyson, Browning, Maurice, Martineau, Ruskin, and Newman usually did—in independence of his listeners, or without care for their verdicts.

He once admitted to me that his high appreciation

of Mathematics, and his under-estimate of Philosophy, were due to the circumstances of his own university education; 'and doesn't that account,' he added, 'for much in all our lives?' I recalled the fact which many had forgotten, that in his young manhood he had been a candidate for a chair of Philosophy in Scotland, and that Goethe had given him a testimonial; and he said, 'What a mercy that I didn't get it; but Goethe was very kind.'

Referring once more to his marvellous conversational gift, I think there is no doubt that he owed much of his influence to it. It led his contemporaries, and in fact all who heard him, to be profoundly interested in him, perhaps even more than their perusal of his books did.

His wildly adverse judgments on those from whom he differed were more than unfortunate. At times he had hardly a good word to say for any of them, his diagnosis was so one-sided. I have mentioned his comments on Gladstone, Disraeli, and Darwin. He also ran down Macaulay and Hallam, Thackeray and Jane Austen. Great as was my admiration of the man I must not conceal my dissent from many of his critical verdicts. He was full of prejudice—*steeped* in it I could say—so far as the genius and work of the Church Catholic are concerned. He had a very genuine appreciation of moral goodness, especially in humble life; and the most filial (although at times an exclusive) hero-worship for that special type of piety which had been exemplified by his own parents. At the same time, I think he divined what

was best in the stern Calvinism in which they had reared him. But, with all his width of vision and cosmopolitan sympathy, he could not appreciate the work that was being done, and done admirably, by labourers in grooves that really ran parallel to his own; and when that work was referred to he often grumbled and became taciturn. When he was the victim of dyspepsia he positively growled at many whom he had met in the flesh, especially if his intercourse with them was like that which he had with Coleridge and Wordsworth.

I should add that he cared little for the minutiae of scholarship, which rather bored him, as they bored Emerson. He had a greater appreciation for the attempt made to popularise the classics by good translations. He once asked how Bohn's Libraries of the great writers were esteemed in Scotland, adding that in his judgment it was a most wonderful series of books. He spoke of public libraries with enthusiasm, asked his visitors if they used that in the British Museum, and, if they answered that they did not use it much, would say 'You don't know what you lose.'

Carlyle's house in Cheyne Row has been described by many. I may quote a few sentences from Mr. Reginald Blunt's admirable account of it, which was published as a postscript to his appeal on behalf of the purchase-fund in 1894:

'Descending to the basement there is the dimly lit stone-paved kitchen, with its still surviving pump, and the broad-barred open grate, where Mrs. Carlyle made the famous marmalade, "pure as liquid amber, in taste

and in look almost poetically delicate"; and where Leigh Hunt's "endlessly admirable morsel of Scotch porridge" was stirred at the evening's close. On that mantel stood, in early years, the tinder-box to which Carlyle had often groped his way, when the sleepless night became insufferable, to find flint and steel for his pipe. Then, returning to the ground floor, is the little dining-room and the breakfast-room at the back overlooking the strip of weed-grown garden, where the troubled worker "delved to compose himself" or "stayed smoking in the back court" through the June night, "till the great dawn streamed up" before his eyes. The roomy stairway, with those beautiful spiral balusters of pitch pine, which lend character to so many old Chelsea homes, carries one to the drawing-room, "the room she gradually made so beautiful and comfortable," the "warm little parlour" where they two "sat snug most evenings in stuffed chairs"; which Mrs. Carlyle had enlarged at the expense of her own bedroom, and in which Carlyle himself died. Here are the quaint double doors which, one evening towards the end of the long illness that foreran the last, she "suddenly opened to him in the drawing-room, leaning on her hazel staff, absolutely beautiful, so gracefully and with such child-like joy and triumph, to irradiate his solitude." There, by the comfortably proportioned fireplace, is the spot where Carlyle was wont to sit on the rug, "his back against the mantel-jamb, his wife reclining on the sofa, a bright kindly fire, candles hardly lit, all in trustful *chiaroscuro*, with a pipe of tobacco, and door

ever so little open, so that all the smoke went up the chimney.'

And what names are associated with this room! Leigh Hunt, Irving, John Stuart Mill, Cavaignac, Baker, Erasmus Darwin, Owen, Sterling, Mazzini, Emerson, Southey, Tennyson, John Forster, Harriet Martineau, Jeffrey, Chalmers, Kingsley, Spedding, Bright, Colenso, Tyndall, Froude;—these are but few of those whose feet have trodden these stairs, whose voices these walls have heard. To this same adjoining bedroom, on the afternoon of that terrible 21st of April, 1866, Mrs. Carlyle's lifeless form was borne from her carriage after the fatal drive; hence she was taken to her last resting-place 'in the silence of the Abbey Kirk at Haddington.'

Carlyle wrote thus of the house to his wife, when she became his, in 1834:

'The street is flag-paved, sunk-storied, iron-railed, all old-fashioned and tightly done up. The house itself is eminently antique, wainscoted to the very ceiling; broadish stairs with massive balustrades (in the old style), corniced; floors thick as a rock, with thrice the strength of a modern floor. Then as to rooms; three stories beside the sunk story, in every one of them three apartments, in depth something like forty feet in all, first dining-room, then a back breakfast-room, then out of this a china-room or pantry, shelved, and fit to hold crockery for the whole street. Such is the grand area which continues to the top, and furnishes every bedroom with a drawing-room; on the whole a massive, roomy, sufficient old house, with many curious and queer old

presses and shelved closets. We lie safe at a bend of the river, away from all the great roads, have air and quiet hardly inferior to Craigenputtock, an outlook from the back windows into more leafy regions, with here and there a red high-peaked old roof looking through, and see nothing of London except by day the summits of St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, and by night the gleam of the great Babylon, affronting the peaceful skies.'

I was struck by seeing on the walls of some of the rooms the portraits, *inter alia*, of men with whom I thought Carlyle could have little sympathy, notably that of Lord Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh Review*. I did not then know the great services which Jeffrey had rendered to him in the days of his early struggle in Scotland. Everyone who knew the house has memories of the drawing-room, in which were a Goethe and a Richter portrait; mine are mostly of the small parlour downstairs. The tea-table in that room would be a choicer relic for posterity than the one the Wordsworths used at Rydal Mount. Carlyle would often sit in that small room, smoking with a friend, for hours. There is a story told of someone going down to spend the evening; and they spent it without a word of speech, smoking pipe after pipe in meditative reverie. At last the guest rose to leave, and said, 'We have had a fine evening, Carlyle.' 'A most delightful one,' said the eulogist of the phrase that 'speech is silvern, but silence golden.' At other times his torrent of talk swept everything before it. It was said of him satirically that he had

managed to condense the eternal silence into fifty volumes of speech. Sometimes when he talked, as already mentioned, the whole vocal firmament gave forth electric sparks, or rather aurora-borealis coruscations of genius, which it is now quite impossible to restate. I think he rather enjoyed the effect he produced, although he was neither an egotist, nor an egoist, in the common sense of the terms; and was always ready to defer (as Mr. Gladstone was) to anyone who interrupted the flow of discourse, if what he had to say was to the point. But woe be to the interrupter if the interjection was inept, invalid, or irrelevant! He never got a chance again. I remember his reference to a chatter-box who had worried him much, whom he called an 'intellectual hurdy-gurdy'; and all he said of him afterwards was, 'The idiot, the idiot.' He certainly used to lash men, who came under his chastisement, with both whips and scorpions; but he entertained no personal *animus* against them. His likings and dislikings were due to the medium through which he got to know his contemporaries; and when he met the men whom he had scorched by criticism, frequently all was changed.

Once at the Athenæum Club a member said to another, 'When did you last see the sage?' 'Not for a long time,' was the answer. 'I think I'll go down to-night, and have a talk.' The questioner thought it would be curious to meet both men next day, and find out their respective impressions of each other. He first met the visitor to Cheyne Row, and asked, 'How did

you get on last night?' 'Well,' he replied, 'he's an old man. You must make allowance for age. He's getting garrulous, and just a trifle scatter-brained.' Later in the day this friend went down to Chelsea, and said, 'You had —— here last night. How did you get on?' '*Get on!*' was the reply. 'He seemed to me to think that God A'mighty couldn't make another man like him, if he were to try!'

We once talked of the provinces of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. Carlyle seemed to agree that the intermediate region might be helpful to those who were wandering in the mists of the first and third, seeking a path and finding none; and he said, 'Yes; correlate them, correlate them; for all three are one at the root.'

Again talking about worship he said, 'I don't know much about the "Gate called Beautiful," but I believe in the "Temple not made with hands."' He remained to the end a Calvinistic necessitarian, as he had been brought up in his boyhood, fatalistically devout. I never quite got over my dislike to his scorn for all the 'fools' of the world, which was due to his appreciation of power, pure and simple. He had the sternness of the Puritan soldier in him from first to last, but associated with this there was such a detestation of unreality, an abhorrence of pretence and every kind of humbug, that his sternness was soon forgiven.

My last words of him must be those of unqualified praise. He habitually rose, or tried to rise, to those Infinities and Eternities which he never defined (or

tried to define) to himself, or others; but it was the grandeur of his moral ideal—alike in individual conduct, for national life, and for the guidance of posterity—that drew towards him, and kept sympathetically near him, many whose beliefs differed from his as far as the east is from the west. Their allegiance to him was not due to their belonging to the same ‘school,’ or being of the same ‘set’ or ‘coterie;’ and not to the ‘sweet reasonableness’ of his opinions, or the accuracy of his verdicts. It arose out of a common love of ‘whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, and of good report,’ out of a *camaraderie* strangely based on the harmony of opposites, and the underlying affinities of excellence wheresoever it exists.

I may add, by way of postscript, a somewhat trivial detail. In 1851—the year of the first International Exhibition—I went up to London with my father and brother. We stayed with cousins of Mrs. Carlyle, and were taken by Dr. John Carlyle, the translator of Dante, to the British Museum. The Assyrian antiquities, collected by Sir Henry Layard at Nineveh and elsewhere, had been recently added to our national collection. These, and the more famous Elgin marbles, sent at an earlier date from Athens, were explained to us with much courtesy and learning. As we were leaving the Museum, Carlyle’s greater brother called for some material in reference to *Frederick the Great*, which he had just begun. We saw, but did not speak to him, and were only listeners to the younger, who

spent much time with us so kindly ; but I think he was gratified to find that Scots boys cared more for these antiquities than for anything that the Knightsbridge exhibition could show them, even although it included the famous Koh-i-noor.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE

As with Carlyle, so with Maurice, it was at Linlathen that I first met him ; afterwards in Edinburgh, London, and elsewhere. I have a specially vivid remembrance of the way in which he repeated the *paternoster* at Morning Prayer, the slow emphatic cadence of his voice, which gave separate emphasis to each petition, and brought out its meaning by the mere solemnity of utterance. It was like nothing I ever heard before or since ; and I certainly never met anyone whose personality, apart from anything he said, so vividly suggested an habitual life in that hemisphere which the denizens of earth only occasionally enter and traverse. You felt that you were in the presence of a man who lived, in the most simple, natural, and accustomed manner, in two worlds—the material and the spiritual—and who ‘did not feel it to be strange.’ With the keenest relish for mundane things, and what they brought him, there was in all his speech and behaviour, in what he said and in what he left unsaid, a detachment from things material. This was to him the most natural and familiar attitude of mind and heart. As to the sense-world, you saw at once that he was ‘in it, yet not of it.’ And after hearing him speak even a few sentences it was evident that the

essence of what he had to say to his contemporaries was this: 'The kingdom of heaven is within you. The way to the blessed life is very simple. You have not to ascend to any heights (whether speculative or utilitarian), to go down into any depths (theoretical or practical). You have simply to apprehend that by which also you are apprehended, to lay hold of that which surrounds you—whether you will or no—and you are in the "present heaven" disclosed in the motto *et teneo et teneor*. Eternal life is here, not in the dim hereafter. You can have it—and know that you have it—now.'

I think that it was Maurice's habitual vision of the Unseen, his consciousness of the Infinite as a present reality, of the Eternal as an all-pervading unity, that gave him a place so serene amongst his contemporaries, and an influence which so often magnetised others, lifting them up to higher levels along with him. In the sphere of Religion he rose above the Heraclitic process of becoming, and realised the Eleatic constancy of being.

Perhaps the fundamental note in his teaching from first to last, through his numerous books and discourses, was this. The Eternal is for ever revealing Himself to man, and cannot cease to do so; and by means of these disclosures of 'the besetting God' 'man liveth.' The way in which he emphasised the self-manifestation of the Infinite within the finite sphere, the ceaseless apocalypse of God to man, as the Neoplatonists of Alexandria put it—although he knew the limitations of

their philosophy well—led men like Archdeacon Hare to say, in a strain of hyperbole, that ‘no such mind had been given to the world since Plato’s.’ That is, of course, as great an exaggeration as the remark that there have been only three great theologians since the time of the Apostles, and that he was one of them. There is no exaggeration, however, in the statement that he saw more clearly than his contemporaries the impossibility of reaching the highest truths by the pathway of the pure reason; that the mental toil of climbing, or intellectual system-building, must ultimately be abandoned; and that the best way to reach them is to receive them in ‘a wise passiveness,’ though not in blind receptivity.

And so he read in all History the self-manifestation and revelation of God, especially in the history of the Hebrew race, and the Christian Commonwealth or Church. I do not refer to his books, or quote from his writings, in support of this; although it would be easy to do so. I refer to the outcome of all his conversation, so far as I am able to memorialise it. With that conviction radical and all-dominant, he did not find his faith in the least degree staggered by Bishop Colenso’s questioning the historic literality of the Pentateuch, or by the discussions and discoveries of scholars as to the composite character of the earliest Biblical records, and by the allegoric drapery which their authors, or recorders, threw around the facts they chronicled. Enough for him that there were *facts within the stories*, wheat within the chaff. He had the profoundest reverence

for facts. A fact might be authentic, while the record of the fact was not infallible; but even the facts were of no value if they were not the indices of character, that is to say the manifestation of what underlay and transcended them. The highest revelation was the drawing aside of a veil, or rather of many veils which hid the character and obscured the ever-evolving purpose of the Infinite. And so, while he revered facts, he had a higher reverence for their outcome; disclosed, recorded, and chronicled in *Institutions*. 'Facts,' he said, 'were angels of the Lord,' but he seemed to believe that Institutions were his very children. 'If God reveals his ideas to us,' he said, 'the revelation must be through facts. I believe that the modern process of idealising the past tends to destroy both facts and ideas and to leave nothing but a certain deposit, for which the sensation-novel is the appropriate sink. Institutions are deposits of a totally different kind, a genuine residuum; and all historic criticism is good, it seems to me, so far as it tests facts and interprets Institutions. It should be carried on not only in the spirit of love for facts, but in reverence for what the facts contain.'

It seemed to me that it was first the new light it cast on human nature, and secondly the fresh power it gave to human character, that were to Maurice the fundamental witness-bearers to the value of the Bible. That book was to him the authentic, although not always the literal, record of a divine conflict with evil; and of a determination that evil shall be controlled, minimised, and subdued, if not eliminated by the power of good.

In recording the *Colloquia Peripatetica* of Dr. John Duncan, in 1859, and editing them in 1870, I quoted one of his sayings about Maurice and his system. It was to this effect: 'In Maurice's system, the ethicist devours the lawyer. . . . It is a system of pure illegality. It will never go down with the lawyers. It upsets their science entirely. . . . I can understand the fact I have heard that Sir William Hamilton disliked the theology of Maurice. He was a lawyer, and no lawyer is likely to fall into a sentimentalism about law.' On receiving a copy of the *Colloquia*, Maurice wrote: 'You were quite right not to omit Dr. Duncan's sentence upon me, and I hope you will not in any subsequent edition. You would do something to mar the full understanding of his mind and character if you suppressed any of his opinions, because you may not happen to adopt them as your own. . . .' In a sequel letter he wrote, ' . . . I wish for an opportunity of expressing publicly, however briefly, the interest which I felt in that criticism, and in the book which contains it. This I am about to do in the preface to a new edition of my lectures on *The Conscience*. . . . Thank you much for connecting me with my dear friend, at whose house¹ I had the pleasure of meeting you. His name must be a bond of union to everyone who knew him and cared for him. He introduced me in 1854 to Sir W. Hamilton, who was paralysed and whose voice was inarticulate, but whose grand face and head it was a great satisfaction to look at. I doubt if he had ever heard my name till Mr. Erskine sent it in

¹ Linlathen.

on that occasion, so that I suppose Dr. Duncan would have done me too much honour in supposing that Sir William had ever looked into any of my books. . . .'

The following is part of the preface to the second edition of his lectures on *The Conscience*. They are a good illustration of Maurice as a controversialist.

'Since these lectures were published, there has appeared an exceedingly interesting volume entitled *Colloquia Peripatetica*, by the late John Duncan, D.D., Professor of Hebrew in the New College of Edinburgh. These are reported by . . . His teacher must have been a man of rare originality, varied culture, great vigour in expressing thoughts which were worthy to be expressed and remembered. . . . The reader who shall give himself the benefit and gratification of studying this little volume (it will suggest more to him than many ten times its size) will find that I have not been bribed to speak well of it by any praise which Dr. Duncan has bestowed on me. My only excuse for alluding to it is that it contains the severest censure on my writings which they have ever incurred; though they have not been so unfortunate as to escape censure. If Dr. Duncan's complaint of them were established, I should own at once that I was absolutely disqualified for speaking on Casuistry or Moral Philosophy; that the less young men have to do with me, the better it will be for them. He says that my "system is pure illegality," that law is by me banished from ethics, or is swallowed up in ethics. What my system is, or does, I really am not able to say. I have always professed with great earnest-

ness that I have never constructed a "system;" that, if I did, it would exclude most of the truth which I feel to be the support of my life, and would include most of the falsehoods against which I protest. But that I hold any morality which banishes law to be an inhuman morality, to be inconsistent with the order of God's Universe, I think every reader of these lectures and of those on *Social Morality* will be constrained to admit, whatever may be his judgement in other respects of them or of me.

'It is, unfortunately, impossible to ascertain what passages in my writings conveyed this impression of my "illegality" to Dr. Duncan. If I ever meet with them and find the sense which he perceived in them to be their natural sense, I shall be more anxious to blot them out than anyone else can be. Against any ordinary criticism even a writer who is naturally thin-skinned becomes by degrees tolerably hardened. One proceeding from a man of such learning and worth as Dr. Duncan, I have thought it a duty to notice, less for my own sake than for the honour of the University which has permitted me to be one of its teachers.

'Cambridge: January 1872.'

I used to think Maurice one of the very humblest of men, almost overburdened by a sense of his failures; but far above that, and counteractive of it, was his habitual sense of the presence of the Infinite within him, and the direct guidance of the everlasting Will. His controversy with Dean Mansel as to the knowableness of

God, and the way in which we know him, brought out the moral characteristics of the man in a remarkable manner. Some have thought that there was in him not only humility, but an exaggerated and almost morbid self-humiliation. I do not think so; but he had a keen sense of two things, first of failure in reaching his own ideals, and secondly of the extent of his debt to others, or of what they had to teach him alike by their thoughts and their achievements. I remember that when I first read his works half a century ago, I and many of my fellow-collegians were at once fascinated by their wisdom, and repelled by their excess of impartiality. Youthful disputants are easily irritated by this style of action in an intellectual athlete, viz. that before attacking an adversary he says 'This man has far more to teach me than I can ever possibly teach him!' So it was with Maurice. In his extreme fairmindedness and generosity, he would draw out the several points brought forward to his own disadvantage by the antagonist whom he was just about to try to annihilate in argument. But it must be remembered that this was the intellectual virtue of chivalry, the old crusader spirit carried over into the arena of debate. Would that we had more of it amongst us now.

As a foeman Maurice was never a hot-blooded free-booter, but invariably a modern knight-errant; not an angry blind exterminator, but a courteous champion of what he deemed the rights of others rather than his own. More than this. His aim was to teach his

generation that their noblest victories could not be won by an intellectual cross-examination of problems, but rather by the opening of the 'inward eye' upon them. As an example of his humble gratitude for little things, the following sentence may be quoted. It was the acknowledgment of having received a trivial essay from a comparative stranger. 'I must heartily thank you for the instruction it has given me, and for the hints—specially valuable to an old gossip—of the way in which a series of important facts, specially difficult to condense, may be brought into a short and reasonable and most agreeable narrative.'

Maurice was affectionately named by his disciples 'the prophet of Vere Street,' where he used to preach. It was his personality, more than any of his sayings or doings, that impressed these disciples. They sometimes felt a certain awe in his presence, which prevented them from saying things or asking questions which they would fain have said or asked. He was a man who could never be drawn into conversation, and he greatly disliked controversial talk. In his letter to Mrs. Hort, partly reproduced in his *Life*, will be found one of the best portraits of the real man.

He was godfather to one of the daughters of Mr. Blunt, the Rector of Chelsea; and the baptism-breakfast at the Rectory afterwards was remarkable for the fact that Mrs. Carlyle, who was present, afterwards carried off Maurice to see her husband—a 'reconciliation meeting' after a long coolness between them, due to the pain which the chapter on Coleridge in Carlyle's *Life of*

Sterling had caused to Maurice. *Sterling's* daughters lived much with the Maurices.¹

The list of those who signed the protest against Maurice's expulsion from King's College shows how large a number of clergy there were who felt indebted to him for much in their higher life. It is difficult to place him within any of the stereotyped parties in the Church, (broad, or high, or low), and he would have resented such an attempt; but his real successors were such men as Robertson of Brighton, Arthur Stanley, Llewelyn Davies, and of course Charles Kingsley. They were all 'minor prophets,' side by side with the sage of Vere Street; but they perhaps contributed to make their master more intelligible to the world.

Mr. Blunt wrote to me thus of his revered teacher: 'My first acquaintance with Frederick Maurice was in 1849, when at Cambridge, reading for my degree. We had formed a small literary society in that year, of which the late Professor Hort was the most remarkable;

¹ I may add that, while the Sage could not join the breakfast party, he sent by his wife, on little slips of paper, some delightful sayings and good wishes for the little girl from his favourite authors, which he had written out, and which were read aloud to the enjoyment of the guests. Some were as follows:

(1) 'One sun by day,
By night ten thousand shine.'

(2) 'Tommy Douglas lost his cow,
And couldn't tell where to find her;
When he had done what man can do,
The cow came home, and her tail behind her.'

(3) 'Be thankful that you are not in Purgatory.' When this sentence was read, 'Ah!' said Maurice, with his quiet smile, 'but that is *just where we are!*'

and as we were all readers of Maurice's works we persuaded Hort to write a letter to Maurice, asking him to tell us distinctly his views respecting eternal punishment—and one or two other points of doctrine about which we were in difficulty—as we were all still under the religious teaching of the old evangelical school. In due time an answer came, in a long letter; and I can never forget the intense interest with which we read it. It is now to be found in the second volume of Maurice's *Life*, p. 15. I think that in many respects that letter is the fullest and most admirable exposition of Maurice's views on the question that he ever wrote. Certainly for three of us—Hort, Ellerton, and myself—it proved to be a life-long deliverance from an intolerable bondage, and a clearing-up of what could, or could not, be safely said on that subject.' Mr. Blunt continues:

'It was not till four or five years after leaving Cambridge that I first made personal acquaintance with Maurice. I was then a curate in a country parish in Shropshire, under Henry de Bunsen. Maurice and his wife had come down to take the duty in a parish not far off, and to reside for a time at the rectory. I shall never forget the thrill of emotion which came over me when I met him for the first time, walking towards me in company with my vicar, and evidently in deep conversation with him. He was a rather short man, with broad shoulders, a magnificent head, and a face which bore the expression that Archdeacon Hare once used of him, viz. as having "the subtlest intellect in Europe." I think we were always a little overpowered

in his company by the overwhelming sense of his goodness and greatness ; while he seemed equally shy from genuine humility and modesty, which would have been almost painful if it had not been so perfectly sincere. It was quite beyond our skill, or courage, to "draw" him upon points on which we most longed to consult him, but upon which he would rarely give any definite opinion. Still the mere contact with such a character made us go on our way afterwards wiser and better men. To *hear* him read, or rather *pray*, the prayers in church was often more efficacious than to listen to his sermons ; and his answers made in church, when he stood godfather to my daughter Elaine, still ring in my ears with a depth of intense devotion and reality. He was never popular, either as a preacher or lecturer ; and yet the result of his preaching and lecturing has been to create a new school in the Church of England, and to give a far wider and more comprehensive view of the Kingdom of Christ.'

To have made so many in his time understand the meaning of Revelation, as the simple uplifting of the veils that ordinarily hang around those truths, which—when thus disclosed—attest themselves spontaneously, was magnificent service. It was all the more valuable that it now seems as simply obvious to the understanding, as the law of gravitation evidenced by the fall of the apple in the orchard. The controversy with Dean Mansel—now as much forgotten as the strife occasioned by Bishop Colenso's examination of the Pentateuch—was much farther reaching. Maurice could not brook

the surrender of the direct knowableness of God to the agnostic, whether the assault was delivered within or without the Christian citadel; and no one taught his generation better that the internal truth of things is independent of our cognition of it. He saw as few theologians ever did that the withdrawal of all hindrances (external and internal) to the direct inflowing of the light made Revelation progressive, and changed its phases, every one of which was divine. Uniformity in Revelation destroyed it; made it not only inept, but unveracious.

We do not turn to him as we resort to Darwin for light on scientific fact and process; we do not learn much from his writings as to the historic evolution of the data of Religion. But we are led by him to what is beyond and behind phenomenal experience, and yet lies within each link in the chain of progress. In this lies the surpassing value of his *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, a work which I venture to think is his greatest achievement. His 'vision of Him who reigns' was so intense and abiding that the inspection of the particular things through which he saw it, however fascinating in detail, had relatively less interest to him.

He once said to me, 'As to any fact, what the better are you for a knowledge of it? All that you can say is *evenit*, it has happened, it is an occurrence; but what a shroud of ignorance surrounds these words? What is it to happen, to occur, to come about? And what is it that is happening, occurring, or coming about? Mustn't we get behind the facts to discern that?' 'It is a very little way we can get.' 'Yes: but it's necessary

to proceed by some way to some distance.' 'Perhaps most of all needful to distinguish the wrappings of facts, their embroidery, or mere drapery, from their essence.' 'Certainly, we must beware of putting anything either above or beneath them that does not belong to them. A superstition may be the placing of something of our own above facts, but a supposition is the placing of it under them, which is quite as bad.'

The *inevitable* changes in opinion and belief which have occurred throughout the ages, which were a sign of progress and gradual advance, were also to Maurice an evidence that it was not by his creeds that man is either emancipated, or impelled. These, on the contrary, when they crystallise around him act occasionally as a fetter, and are a barrier to progress. When our deference to them becomes a monotonous or languid assent, our very allegiance instead of enriching may sterilise us. We are enriched by that which underlies the creeds—necessary as they are—viz. by the life that is communicated to us, when our vision is clearest and our aspirations most intense, when we are most plastic and amenable, not to every wind that blows, but to that spirit 'which bloweth where it listeth, although we cannot tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.' Thus thought Maurice.

Mr. Richard Holt Hutton, late editor of *The Spectator*, wrote of Maurice in 1896:

'It is about thirty-five years since the late Walter Bagehot, who was then a student of Lincoln's Inn, where he was afterwards called to the Bar, took me to hear one

of the afternoon sermons of the chaplain of the Inn. I remember Bagehot's telling me, with his usual caution, that he would not exactly answer for my being impressed by the sermon, but that at all events he thought I should feel that something different went on there from that which goes on in an ordinary church or chapel service; that there was a sense of "something religious"—the last phrase Maurice himself would have appreciated—"in the air," which was not to be found elsewhere. I went, and it is hardly too much to say that the voice and manner of the preacher—his voice and manner in the reading-desk, at least as much as in the pulpit—have lived in my memory ever since, as no other voice and manner have ever lived in it. The half stern, half pathetic emphasis with which he gave the words of the Confession, "And there is *no* health in *us*," throwing the weight of the meaning on to the last word, and the rising of his voice into a higher plane of hope as he passed away from the confession of weakness to the invocation of God's help, struck the one note of his life—the passionate trust in eternal help—as it had never been struck in my hearing before, though I never again saw or heard him without again hearing it, much as I find it pervading every page of this striking book.¹ No wonder that, in spite of the singular and voluminous monotony of the book, for every letter it contains is written in just the same key, men so eagerly read it to convince themselves that once at least in our generation a whole life has been lived, not in the effort to escape

¹ *Theological Essays* (1853).

from eternal realities, but in deep dread of losing sight of them even for a moment. Maurice was a witness, if in our day we have ever had a witness, to eternal life, and to eternal life in that sense in which he had learnt to define it from St. John.'

It would be pleasant to linger over some details in Maurice's great work, viz. his *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, in which his aim was to bring his readers face to face with the great thinkers and teachers of the past, to let us into the secrets of their thinking by withdrawing some of the veils which hide it; but this would hardly be a 'retrospect.'

I therefore conclude by stating the impression which intercourse with him left on some who were not his disciples, but only acquaintances or friends. It was this. His rare sense of the organic unity of the race, of his own union with all the other members of it, and the original and indissoluble tie which unites all of them to God in virtue of their lineage and ancestry. These twin convictions underlay the whole of his thought and teaching. More especially it was his aim to induce his contemporaries to realise that religion emerges naturally, and *must* spring into being, so soon as the organic relationship between God and man is realised. There was no escaping from it, no possible evasion of it, if the Revealer is omnipresent and never silent. There were oracles everywhere, 'so many voices in the world, and none of them without signification.' He also saw a divine order underlying all disorder, a good superior to evil and destined to crush it. That the infinite incom-

prehensible One was also knowable as a revealer, and could be apprehended by man through an incessant apocalypse, was the very pivot round which Maurice's life revolved. The Infinite was not to him an abstraction, a stream of tendency, existence in the neuter gender; but a living omnipresent reality, 'a presence that disturbed him with the joy of elevated thoughts'; and no one ever emphasised more consistently and continuously the maxims, 'the Kingdom of Heaven is within you,' *intra te quære Deum*.

and the radiant though fragile beauty of old age, were alike conspicuous. Both her eye and her voice had an inexpressible charm. She inquired with much interest for the widow of one of my colleagues at the University,¹ who used formerly to live in the island, close to Farringford, and whose family were friends as well as near neighbours.

Tennyson soon entered, and at once proposed that we should go out of doors. After a short stroll on the lawn under the cedars, we went into what he himself has called his 'careless-ordered garden,' walked round it, and then sat down in the small summer-house. It is a quaint rectangular garden, sloping to the west, where Nature and Art blend happily; orchard trees, and old-fashioned flower-beds, with stately pines around, giving to it a sense of perfect rest. That garden is truly 'a haunt of ancient peace.' Left alone with the bard for some time, it was impossible not to realise the presence of one of the kings of men. His aged look impressed me. There was the keen eagle eye; and, although the glow of youth was gone, the strength of age was in its place. The lines of his face were like the furrows in the stem of a wrinkled oak-tree; but his whole bearing disclosed a latent strength and nobility, a reserve of power, combined with a most courteous grace of manner. I was also struck by the *négligé* air of the man; so different from that of Browning, or Arnold, or Lowell.

He soon threw aside his picturesque cloak, and laid

¹ Professor Fischer.

down his broad-brimmed hat upon the table. He questioned me about my work at St. Andrews, and, referring to that of his friend Maurice at Cambridge, asked if I knew his books. I gave my opinion of them, and, speaking of his treatment of Mediævalism in his *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, ventured to say it was the best discussion of mediæval thought which we had in English; but added that the man was greater than his philosophy. He answered, 'You are right. Maurice was one of the greatest and best of the men I have ever known.' I referred to what had struck myself so much, viz. the uplifting influence of his conversation, and the magnetic effect of his mere presence—like that of James Martineau or John Henry Newman, to take two very different characters. 'Ah!' he replied; 'far greater than Newman, really more spiritual, and profounder every way.'

We soon talked of the season, and of the poets. 'The Promise of May' was all around us, and he quoted, with a rich musical intoning of their words, passages from Milton, Virgil, and Lord Surrey. I forget the passages from the two former; but from Lord Surrey it was part of his sonnet on Spring:—

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
With green hath clad the hill, and eke the vale.
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
The turtle to her mate hath told her tale.
Summer is come, for every spray now springs,
Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.

I asked whether he knew the *Day Estival*, by our

cottish poet Alexander Hume, and quoted a stanza from it on the effect of sunrise :—

For joy the birds with boulden throats,
Against his visage sheen,
Take up their kindly music-notes
In woods and gardens green.

He said, 'I prefer Lord Surrey's way of putting it—

The Sun, when he hath spread his rays,
And shew'd his face ten thousand ways ;
Ten thousand things do then begin,
To shew the life that they are in.'

We talked much of the sonnet. He said he thought the best in the language were Milton's, Shakespeare's, and Wordsworth's ; after these three, those by his own brother Charles. '*I at least rank my brother's next to those by the three Olympians.*' He added, 'A sonnet arrests the free sweep of genius, and if poets were to keep to it, it would cripple them ; but it is a fascinating kind of verse, and to excel in it is a rare distinction.' I ventured to refer to the metrical and structural necessity that its last line should form the climax, both of thought and expression, in a sonnet ; and that the whole should be like a wave breaking on the shore. He said, 'Not only so ; the whole should show a continuous advance of thought and of movement, like a river fed by rilllets ; as every great poem, and all essays and treatises, should.' Going back to Milton, he said that he had caught the spirit of his blank verse from Virgil, the long sonorous roll, of which he is such a master ; and quoted passages from each in illustration.

He had no great liking, he said, for arranging the

poets in a hierarchy. He found so much that surpassed himself in different ways in all the great ones; but he thought that Homer, Æschylus, Sophocles, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe—these seven—were the greatest of the great, up to the year 1800. They were not all equal in rank; and, even in the work of that heptarchy of genius, there were trivial things to be found.

The experimental work of poets was referred to, their early tentative efforts; and he spoke of the diseased craving of many persons to have the trifles of a man of genius preserved, and of the positive crime of publishing what a poet had himself deliberately suppressed. If all the contents of a poet's waste-basket were taken out, printed, and issued in a volume, one result would be that the things which he had disowned would be read by many, to whom the great things he had written would be unknown. He said that he himself had suffered in that way. I told him of a poem which Wordsworth wrote when he lived at Alfoxden—an unworthy record of a revolting crime—which he had the good sense never to publish. I had not seen the original, only a copy had been given to me, but I threw it on the fire as soon as I had read it. Tennyson was greatly pleased, and said, 'It was the kindest thing you could have done.'¹

He then spoke of the folly of fancying that every-

His son Hallam, writing in August of that year, said, 'He often quotes you with great honour for having destroyed an unworthy poem by Wordsworth.' The original was afterwards transferred to a grandson of the poet, and is not now likely ever to see the light.

thing a poet says in his verses must have some local meaning, or a personal reference. 'There are some curious creatures who go about fishing for the people, and searching for the places, which they fancy must have given rise to our poems. They don't understand, or believe, that we have any imagination of our own, to *create* the people or the places. Of course we often describe, but we generally let that be known easily enough.'

In this connection he quoted—

The seven elms, the poplars four
That stand beside my father's door.

These things, he said, are returned to us 'by the great artist Memory,' but when critics and commentators search for subterranean meanings they generally lose themselves in fancies.

We then went on—I do not remember what the link of connection was—to talk of Spiritualism, and the Psychical Society, in which he was much interested, and also the problem of Theism. He spoke of the great realm of the Unknown which surrounds us as being *also known*, and having Intelligence at the heart of it; and told more stories than one of spirit manifestations as authentic emanations from the unknown, and as proof that out of darkness light could reach us.

At this stage of our talk Mrs. Hallam Tennyson his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Douglas Freshfield, and her daughter, came up the garden-walk to the summer-house. Miss Freshfield wore a hat on which was an artificial flower, a lilac branch. It at once caught

Tennyson's eye. There was a lilac-tree in bloom close at hand, and he said, 'What is that you are wearing? It's a flowery lie, it's a speaking mendacity.' He asked how she could wear such a thing in the month of May! We rose from the bower, and all went down the garden-walk to see the fig-tree at the foot of it and sundry other things at the western entrance-door, where Miss Kate Greenaway was painting. We returned along a twisting alley under the rich green foliage of elms and ilexes. He spoke much of the ilex, a tree which he greatly admired. We heard both the cuckoo and the nightingale. 'Rosy plumelets' 'tufted the larch.' He said the finest larches he had ever seen were at Inveraray. 'What grand trees you have in Scotland! It's nonsense to complain, as some do, of the want of them. Dr. Johnson was either very unfortunate, or very inaccurate, or incorrectly reported by Boswell on that point.'

I spoke of the destruction of our pine-forests, and of other noble trees, in our late gales. He lamented it, for, he said, 'Your Scotch fir is a magnificent tree, next to the oak in stateliness; and how glorious the colour!' He said he bewailed the loss of all old things—old trees, old historic places, the old creatures of the forest and of the air. 'Aren't your eagles getting scarce? and I hear that even the kingfisher is less common than it was.' I replied that both eagle and kingfisher were becoming almost extinct.

Walking up the lane outside the grounds at the back of Farringford, he pointed out the view beyond Fresh-

water to the east, where, as he says in a well-known poem, which he quoted as we walked, using the early version,

the hoary Channel
Tumbles a breaker on chalk and sand.

This led him to speak of prehistoric things, and of the wonders which Geology had brought to light. He referred to the period of the Weald, when there was a mighty estuary, like that of the Ganges, where we then stood; and when gigantic lizards, the *iguanodon*, &c., were the chief of living things. As we afterwards walked to and fro on the lawn under the shade of the cedars, sheltered by the 'groves of pine' (to which he refers in his poem addressed to Maurice), he told me—without the slightest touch of vanity—that, when he was between thirteen and fourteen years of age, he wrote an epic of several thousand lines. His father was proud of it, and said he thought 'the author would yet be one of the great in English Literature' (good prophet of the future, thought I); 'but,' he added, 'I burned it, when I read the earliest poems of Shelley.'

'I don't care a bit for various readings from the poets, in the volumes I use,' he said, 'although I have changed my own text a good deal. I like to enjoy the book I am reading, and foot-notes distract me. I like to read just straight on.'

'What do you do with the books which are sent to you?' he asked, 'and do you get many? I have them nearly every day, chiefly books of poetry or rhyme. I wish they would rather send me prose. I calculate, by the number of verses which the books contain, that I get a

verse for every three minutes of my life; and the worst of it is that nearly all the writers expect me to answer and acknowledge them!' He handed to me Dr. Kynaston's Latin version of *Demeter*, a copy of which, typewritten, he had received that morning. It was excellent. I remarked on the beauty of the type; and he said he thought of getting a typewriting machine, to answer those correspondents who sent him their verses!

He then spoke of the labour necessary to produce the best things in poetry, and of the re-casting of verses. He said he thought that almost every poet did this habitually. It was very rarely that the simplest song came into a poet's mind, in a rush of melody, all at once. He mentioned someone saying to him of a friend, 'Oh! *he* didn't revise his verses; his MSS. are all unblotted.' "How do you know?" I replied. "*No one knows* what the poets have done with their verses, as they revise and re-cast them before they are written down." He added that *his* chief work was done, not as Wordsworth's had been, in the open air, but in his library, and in the evenings. It seemed as if he needed the quiet of the close of day, and the meditative reverie to which it led, to start him productively.

As we were going toward the house, a nightingale was singing loud and ceaselessly. He told me that, while sitting in a grove on a still evening, one of these birds was close beside him. 'I was as near it as I am to you, and it did not cease to sing. We were so close that I felt the very air move by its wings, and it did not stop singing, or seem to notice me.'

Next day we walked along the 'ridge of the noble down' towards the Needles. To begin with, our talk was chiefly on the problems of Philosophy, and his conversation on the great questions of belief was quite as significant as his remarks on poetry, or even his poems themselves. We spoke of the 'Metaphysical Society,' of which he was one of the original promoters, along with Dr. Martineau, Dean Stanley, Huxley, and Dr. Ward. He said he did not often attend, being seldom in London, but he thought the meetings very useful. For himself he did not get much good from debating problems, especially ultimate ones; but the *camaraderie*, and the exchange of views which took place in such a society, were good for all its members.

He raised the question, How should Philosophy be defined? The 'love of wisdom' was all very well, but to love it and seek it, and yet not find it, was mere vanity and vexation of spirit; and the question was, could we *find* it? I said that Philosophy was both a search and a discovery; at once a process and a product. 'Yes,' he replied; 'but how is the product produced? and I want to know how we are to unite the One with the Many, and the Many with the All.' I said that was the great question of the ages, the radical problem of Metaphysics, and that it was fundamentally an insoluble one. 'For my part,' he replied, 'if I were an old Greek I would try to combine the doctrine of Parmenides with that of Heraclitus. I find that both of them are true in part; but does not all metaphysic seek that which underlies phenomena?' 'Yes; and what it finds it

reaches intuitively, and at first-hand. The great beliefs are not conclusions deduced by logic, but premisses grasped by intuition. I think it is not analysis, with a view to fresh induction, that we need nowadays, so much as a new philosophical synthesis.' 'In any case,' he said, 'we must get to some height above phenomena. We must climb up, and we can't ascend a ladder without rungs. Isn't the ladder of analogy very useful in metaphysics?' 'It is,' I replied, 'but why not dispense with a ladder altogether? Its chief use is to enable us to leap from it, and to reach the Infinite, not by a tedious process of ascent, but by discerning it everywhere within the finite.' 'Yes,' he said, 'I agree with that, and have tried to show something of it in a few of my poems; but the outward world, where the ladders and symbols are, is surely more of a veil which hides the Infinite than a mirror which reveals it.' I replied, 'Did not Browning put it well—

Some say Creation's meant to show him forth,
I say it's meant to hide him all it can.'

He then spoke of Darwin, and of the great truth in Evolution; but it was only one side of a truth that had two sides. 'All things are double one against another.' He also spoke of Giordano Bruno, with whom he had much sympathy, and wondered that so little was written about him.

From this we passed to the subject of Immortality. I ventured to say that it was a more pressing problem in our time than that of Theism, and that agnosticism had undermined it in many quarters. He said he did

not require argumentative proof of a future life, and referred me to *In Memoriam*. He had nothing further to say than what he had already said ; and, although his faith was not stated dogmatically in that poem, everyone could see that he believed in the survival of the individual. He did not profess to solve the problem, but only to lift from us its 'forward pressure.' 'Annihilation was impossible, and inconceivable. We are parts of the infinite whole ; and when we die, and our souls touch the great *Anima Mundi*, who knows what new powers may spring to life within us, and old ones awoken from sleep, all due to that touch ?'

The problem of Free-Will was next talked of, and he referred to the way in which it had been discussed by Dr. Ward, in the *Dublin Review*, and in the columns of the *Spectator*. He said he liked the *Spectator*. He did not always agree with its literary articles, but its philosophy was good.

Conversation then turned to the newspaper-press, and to politics. In politics, as elsewhere, he strove to shun 'the falsehood of extremes.' I defined my position as that of a liberal Conservative, and a conservative Liberal. He said he had written,

He is the true Conservative
Who lops the mouldered branch away.

'But,' he added, 'the branch must be a mouldered one, before we should venture to lop it off.'

Listening to the wind in the trees, and to the sound of running water—although it was the very tiniest of rilllets—led us away from Philosophy ; and he talked of

Sir Walter Scott, characterising him as the greatest novelist of all time. He said 'What a gift it was that Scotland gave to the world in him. And your Burns! he is supreme amongst your poets.' He praised Lockhart's *Life of Walter Scott*, as one of the finest of biographies; and my happening to mention an anecdote of Scott from that book led to our spending the greater part of the rest of our walk in the telling of stories. Tennyson was an admirable story-teller. He asked me for some good Scotch anecdotes, and I gave him some, but he was able to cap each of them with a better one of his own—all of which he told with arch humour and simplicity.

He then told some anecdotes of a visit to Scotland. After he had left an inn in the island of Skye, the landlord was asked, 'Did he know who had been staying in his house? It was the poet Tennyson.' He replied, 'Lor—to think o' that! and sure I thought he was a shentleman!' Near Stirling the same remark was made to the keeper of the hotel where he had stayed. 'Do ye ken who you had wi' ye t'other night?' 'Naa; but he was a pleasant shentleman.' 'It was Tennyson, the poet.' 'An' wha' may *he* be?' 'Oh, he is a writer o' verses, sic as ye see i' the papers.' 'Noo, to think o' that! jeest a pooblic writer, an' I gied him ma best bedroom!' Of Mrs. Tennyson, however, the landlord remarked, 'Oh! but *she* was an angel.'

The conversational power of Tennyson struck me quite as much as his poetry had done for forty years. To explain this I must compare it with that of some

of his contemporaries. It was not like the meteoric flashes and fireworks of Carlyle's talk, which sometimes dazzled as much as they instructed; and it had not that torrent-rush in which Carlyle so often indulged. It was far more restrained. It had neither the continuousness nor the dramatic range of Browning's many-sided conversation; nor did it possess the charm and ethereal visionariness of Newman's. It lacked the fulness and consummate sweep of Ruskin's talk; it had neither the historic range and brilliance of Dean Stanley's speech, nor the fascinating subtlety—elevation and depth combined—of that of Frederick Maurice. But it was clear as crystal, and calm as well as clear. It was terse and exact, precise and luminous. Not a word was wasted, and every phrase was suggestive. Tennyson did not monopolise conversation. He wished to know what other people thought, and therefore to hear them state it, that he might understand their position and ideas. But in all his talk on great problems he at once got to their essence, sounding their depths with ease; or, to change the illustration, he seized the kernel, and let the shell and its fragments alone.

There was a wonderful simplicity allied to his clear vision, and his strength. He was more child-like than the majority of his contemporaries; and, along with this, there was—as already mentioned—a *great reserve of power*. His appreciation of other workers belonging to his time was remarkable. Neither he nor Browning disparaged their contemporaries, as Carlyle so often did when he put them in the pillory. From first to last,

Tennyson looked sympathetically on all good work ; and he had a special veneration for the strong silent thinkers and workers. He was an idealist at heart. Underneath the realism of his nature, this other feature rose above it. He was not so much a Platonist as a Berkeleian ; but faith in the great Kantian triad—God, Duty, Immortality—dominated his life ; God being to him both personal and impersonal, Duty being continuous unselfish devotion to the good of all, and Immortality the survival not only of the race, but of all the units in it. If in *In Memoriam* the ‘wild unrest’ as well as the ‘honest doubt’ of our nineteenth century is embodied, a partial solution of the great enigma is, at the same time, offered ; and while the intellectual form of his theism found expression in such lines as

He, they, one, all, within, without,
The Power in darkness which we guess,

its practical outcome was the attitude of trust and worship.

While Tennyson appreciated the work of Darwin and of Spencer far more than Carlyle did—and many of the ideas and conclusions of modern Science are to be found in his poetry—nevertheless he knew the limitations of Science, and he held that it was the noble office of Poetry, Philosophy, and Religion combined to supplement, and finally transcend it.

Mrs. Fischer, referred to at p. 47, sends me the following memorandum :

‘My recollections of Alfred Tennyson date back to

the year 1853, at which time he purchased the estate of Farringford, and came to settle there. This being the adjoining property to Afton Manor—my father's estate—the Tennysons became our nearest neighbours; and a special introduction to them from my cousin, Sir Alexander Grant, led them to be particularly friendly to us from the first.

'Soon after the Tennysons came to Farringford—Hallam being then about two years old—their son Lionel was born. He was a dreamy-looking and delicate boy, with a far-away and rather troubled look, and was his mother's pet. She used to give both the boys their lessons, including some easy gymnastic exercises, in the sunny morning-room, at the back of the house, looking out upon the lawn and trees beyond; and we often found them at their lessons, when we called in the morning, as we were privileged to do.

'On other occasions we would find Mrs. Tennyson alone in the large drawing-room—always writing—arrayed in a dress of soft grey merino, trimmed with velvet or fur, and with a long train; a piece of rich old lace, worn instead of a cap, drooping over her hair behind and coming to a point in front. She was extremely kind in lending us books; among these I particularly remember Fichte's philosophical works, which she admired greatly. Her manner was always most gracious and dignified—perhaps rather languid, but this arose chiefly from lack of vitality or physical strength.

'When Lionel was about five years old, a great comet

appeared ; on the child seeing it for the first time, he exclaimed "Am I dead, Mamma?", the glorious vision evidently suggesting to his mind the pictures which his mother had drawn of the other world.

'Hallam was sweet, and more ordinary-looking ; both were always most picturesquely dressed when little boys, generally in drab pelisses lined with dark blue, and white beaver hats.

'I do not remember my first sight of the poet. Indeed we did not see him very often, for he was shy and seldom came into the drawing-room when callers were there ; and on one occasion we caught sight of him as we came in, disappearing through the large window which opened nearly to the ground. Then, too, in the first year of our acquaintance, my sister and I were so young that our visits to Farringford were only in the mornings, but after a time we began to be invited occasionally on an evening, when friends were staying there.

'One evening, when about fifteen, I was invited, with my aunt Lady Grant, and a circumstance occurred which strongly showed the poet's delicate consideration for others. He had had some religious discussion with my aunt, in the course of which he expressed his disbelief in some of her favourite orthodox doctrines ; Mrs. Tennyson and myself listening to their conversation. Afterwards he asked my aunt to go out of the room and speak with him alone ; and I subsequently learnt from her that he had then expressed his regret that they had discussed these questions in my presence, as I

was so young, and he said he should be very sorry to unsettle my faith.

‘From 1854 to 1860—when I was married, and left Freshwater—our intercourse with Farringford was pretty constant. Among the Tennysons’ friends whom we met during that time were Mr. and Mrs. Coventry Patmore—“Mr. Patmore, and his Angel in the House,” as Mrs. Tennyson called them—; Mr. and Mrs. Clough, he tall and serious, she active and cheerful (she was described by Mrs. Tennyson as “a woman who walks”); Mr. Edward Lear, the painter, and author of *Nonsense Botany*; Mr., afterwards Sir Francis Palgrave (some-time Professor of Poetry at Oxford); Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Denison Maurice (he quiet, grave, and kindly, she an invalid); Mr. Parker, the publisher; Mr. Venables; Mr. Richard Doyle, who illustrated *Punch*; Professor Jowett; Mr. and Mrs. Tom Taylor, and many others.

‘Mrs. Tom Taylor sang some of Tennyson’s songs set to music by herself. I remember especially her charming rendering of *The Miller’s Daughter*. But no one ever sang Tennyson’s songs like Mr. Lear, nor have I ever heard anything to equal his rendering of “O that ’twere possible”—for passion and pathos:—the setting was his own. I heard Tennyson say to him, “You are the only person who renders my songs after my own heart.”

‘Two evenings among many stand out in memory; and, as I write, the scenes come before me vividly. On these occasions, we went up to Farringford at about

8 o'clock, and were shown into the large drawing-room, where Mrs. Tennyson was sitting, or lying on the sofa, generally alone; for they seldom had lady-guests to stay. The great room—with its handsome oaken mantel-piece and rich dark furniture—was much in shadow, being lighted only by a pair of tall wax candles. There was always a roaring fire, for those evenings were generally in winter. Tea was spread, and we would have a talk with Mrs. Tennyson before the gentlemen came in from the dining-room. As soon as they appeared, Mrs. Tennyson made the tea herself, putting in a large quantity and allowing it to stand only a minute. She used a big comfortable iron kettle, which was always on the fire ready.

'On the first of the two evenings to which I have referred, Tennyson read the whole of *Maud* aloud to us. When he came to the passage,

"Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,"
They were crying and calling,

he turned suddenly to me and said, "What birds were those?" Luckily I answered right; whereupon he said that someone, when asked, had replied, "Nightingales!"

'The second evening imprinted on my memory is recorded in the Memoir of Tennyson, by a few words quoted from Mrs. Tennyson's diary. The principal guests were Mr. Edward Lear, Mr. Franklin Lushington, and Sir John Simeon.

'After Mr. Lear's singing of "O that 'twere possible"—when all were hushed and subdued, in the dimly lighted room,—Sir John Simeon walked to the window, drew

aside the heavy curtain and let in the moonlight, which was streaming through the trees and shrubberies upon the lawn close by, and shining on the distant sea and rocks.

'The effect was never to be forgotten—the solemn trance-like feeling, the shadowy room, the subdued voices, and the pale moon looking down upon us.

'Other evenings I remember, of a more ordinary kind, but all delightful; one Christmas Eve we played blind man's buff, and Tennyson was once the "blind man."

'After 1860, I was much less frequently at Farringford; but about 1864 I met Longfellow there. A large garden party had been invited to meet him; and I well remember the grave calm American poet, with benevolent face and grey hair. Mrs. Tennyson led him round the lawn, introducing him to her guests in turn, with an appropriate word to each.

'My last visit to Farringford was at the New Year of 1891. The great poet was lying on the sofa in the drawing-room, near a blazing fire, sipping his tea, which he sweetened with saccharine. He was particularly kind and genial.

'Tennyson did not at any time take much part in parish affairs, and he was not a very popular landlord, fancying that he was imposed upon by his tenants, which was probably the case.

'In the great rejoicings on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's marriage, however, he took a leading part. There was a huge bonfire on the top of Farringford Down, and the whole parish trooped up in the darkness to assist

in the ceremony of lighting it. My mother told me afterwards that Tennyson, marching among them all, was quite delighted at her calling out "Forward, the Light Brigade," as they were starting.

'For years Mrs. Tennyson acted as the poet's amanuensis, herself answering the numerous letters that poured in upon him from every quarter. Many a "rhymers" would send his verses to the poet for criticism, and however useless they might be, she kindly took some notice of them.

'When we first knew her, and for long afterwards, she always rose at 7.30 A.M., saying once, "I require a long day for my work." Indeed, she suffered latterly from a sort of writer's paralysis of the arm, owing to over-writing, and was obliged to lay aside her pen almost entirely during the last years of her life.

'The poet's firm belief in the immortality of the soul has been often referred to—particularly in the Memoir by his son, and his writings bear frequent testimony to this belief. I may mention in this connection, that I once heard him say, "The idea of annihilation would be more horrible to me than the idea of everlasting torments." '

Since reference has already been made to the numerous books of rhyme sent to the poet, the following may be added. On December 27, 1890, he wrote from Farringford, acknowledging receipt of a volume of *Essays in Philosophy*: 'Thanks! thanks! for I get a volume of verse almost every morning, and scarcely ever a bit of good wholesome prose. . . .'

A friend writes to me that Tennyson's sister Matilda had spent the day before with her, and had regaled her with stories of Alfred's absentmindedness, to her dire discomfiture. He loved the soothing influence of a strong pipe, but he also greatly loved the society of Matilda, and the seclusion of the Lincolnshire orchard. There would he wander with his pipe and his sister, and then would come her daily trial through devotion, when Alfred forgot something he wanted (usually a book); and, with grave injunctions to Matilda to keep his pipe alight, would meander back to the house, the world forgetting but not by his sister forgot, for the task assigned to her was not easily discharged. She said to my friend, 'I have never been able to learn that accomplishment.'

I may mention another thing which I owe to Sir Henry Irving. One evening he was speaking at the Garrick Club about the difficulty of acting plays which had not been primarily written for the stage. He said he thought that most poets who wrote at first without any intention of having their plays produced on the boards were afterwards disappointed if they found that their tragedies—however welcome to the reading public—were rejected, or pronounced impossible by the stage-manager. He instanced Tennyson, and told us that the Laureate had asked him—with eagerness, if not with intensity—to explain why it was that neither *Harold* nor *Becket* had succeeded. It would be inappropriate to state our actor's opinion as then given, and the

various reasons advanced by the guests around him. I only mention the circumstance to show Tennyson's anxiety to write plays that would, when acted on the stage, be a delight and an education to his countrymen.

In the case of Maurice a concluding paragraph described his influence over his contemporaries. A similar remark may be made as to the impression left by intercourse with Tennyson. He saw so far into the heart of the new problems of his age which confronted him that their abiding characteristic—'half-concealed, yet half-revealed'—came at length to fascinate him. He gave the unvarying impression that he had gone down into their depths, and then risen above them, while he continued to range around them far and wide, surveying them from opposite points of the compass; and depth, height, and width combined are a rare attainment in any man. Tennyson's knowledge of science and criticism, of philosophy and history, of art and religion was great; and perhaps because of its very extent and completeness, his resulting creed was very simple. As already said he held to the elemental postulates of the Kantian triad, and these satisfied him. A very large part of his life was lived alone; and, although he had many friends, ever since the death of Arthur Henry Hallam he wrestled with most problems in solitude.

ROBERT BROWNING

OF Robert Browning I begin by saying that he was one of the most delightful of human beings, more so perhaps than any of his contemporaries. I never heard him utter a morose word, or assume an unsympathetic attitude towards other men of genius. He instinctively sought out the best side of everyone, and all his talk was of the true, the beautiful, and the good. Once only, when the poetic work of his wife—and especially *Aurora Leigh*—had been vehemently assailed by a contemporary poet, he rose to the height of a noble and righteous indignation, and annihilated the detractor by keen satire and withering sarcasm.

I first knew him through a letter he wrote after the following sonnet, by a student-friend who was too modest to send it direct, had been forwarded to his wife, then too feeble to respond herself. Although included in the volume *Pro Patria et Regina*, issued in 1901, in aid of Queen Alexandra's Fund for Soldiers and Sailors, it may be reproduced here.

Among God's Prophets of the Beautiful
She stands a-tiptoe, straining ever higher,
With trembling lips and eyes all prayerful,
For greater largesse of poetic fire;

Her song is winged with holiest desire,
Sped strongly upward, voiced with subtlest art,
And not less loftily the notes aspire
Though all the world is borne upon her heart.
Thus sing, O poet, till the time is born
When men, God's poems perfected, shall sway
All things with song, and catch divinest bars
Of music from the lyric of the morn,
From all the changing drama of the day,
And the grand epos of the nightly stars.

His reply was most courteous, and he asked myself and the author of the sonnet to call on him when we were next in London. I did so. His wife had died in the interval.

No one could ever forget a first interview with Browning. I remember during my student years in the early fifties of last century, hearing from a senior—who had left the University and become a European and Asiatic wanderer, as well as a brilliant press-correspondent—that he had been to Florence, and had spent many evenings with the Brownings at 'Casa Guidi.' I do not think I ever broke the tenth commandment of the Jewish Decalogue more flagrantly than by then envying the good of my neighbour. My friend, however, did not seem to think very highly of the honour, and his tone led me at once to think of the poem *Memorabilia* in which Browning photographs the man who once met Shelley and thought nothing of it, but only laughed at his friend caring much about it; comparing the incident to his crossing a desolate moor and there picking up an eagle's feather, the only thing worth remembering.

When I called at Warwick Crescent I found the poet

most affable and genial, gracious in manner and radiant in spirit; but what most impressed me was the many-sided fulness of his life, his knowledge, and his sympathy; the multitudinousness of the ways in which he touched and sounded the depths of human experience; the vast range of his interests, and the eager throbbing intensity of his nature. I had but a short interview with him on that occasion, as Sir Frederic Leighton soon came in to talk on some Royal Academy business; but before he arrived Browning had spoken in a singularly unreserved way, and in very remarkable terms, about his wife. He said it had been his lot to know many distinguished women in his time, variously gifted and rarely good; but he had never known any-one like her. Putting aside their relationship, she was endowed with such qualities of mind, imagination, and heart that she was, as she had described Madame Dudevant,

A large-brained woman, and large-hearted man.

‘As a poet,’ he said, ‘she excelled me in many ways.’

A year after I went to be professor at St. Andrews, some of our students thought of electing Browning as their Lord Rector. He had been asked in the previous year (1876) by some of the Glasgow students to allow himself to be nominated Rector of the Western University, to which he had replied, ‘I feel it very hard to refuse, however certain I am that my unfitness for the honour obliges me to do so. You may not know that the same offer was made to me some years ago, six I believe. I am sure I feel as much gratitude to the

students, if not as their goodness and sympathy deserve, at least as their cordiality will require. . . . How strange ! I arrived at Glasgow one dark autumn evening seven years since, passed a few hours of the next day in seeing the town and its memorable places, and then left—without making acquaintance of a single inhabitant ; and now from Glasgow comes all this care about me !’

Knowing that I had met the poet, and that he had declined the honour at Glasgow, some of our undergraduates called to ask whether I could help them to induce him to come to St. Andrews. I wrote the following letter to aid them ; but, as there were only a few days before the election would take place, I advised that a small deputation should proceed at once to London, and call on the poet to plead their own cause.

‘ The University, St. Andrews : Nov. 17, 1877.

‘ . . . The students of this University have nominated you as their Lord Rector ; and intend, unanimously I am told, to elect you to that office on Thursday.

‘ I believe that hitherto no Rector has been chosen by the undivided suffrage of any Scottish University. They have heard, however, that you are unable to accept the office ; and your committee, who were deeply disappointed to learn this afternoon of the way in which you have been informed of their intentions, are, I believe, writing to you on the subject. So keen is their regret that they intend respectfully to wait upon you on Tuesday morning by deputation, and ask if you

cannot waive your difficulties in deference to their enthusiasm, and allow them to proceed with your election.

‘Their suffrage may, I think, be regarded as one sign of how the thoughtful youth of Scotland estimate the work you have done in the world of letters.

‘And permit me to say that while these rectorial elections in the other Universities have frequently turned on local questions, or been inspired by political partisanship, St. Andrews has honourably sought to choose men distinguished for literary eminence, and to make election to its Rectorship a tribute at once of intellectual and moral esteem.

‘May I add that when the *perfervidum ingenium* of our northern race takes the form, not of youthful hero-worship, but of loyal admiration and respectful homage, it is a very genuine affair. In the present instance it is no mere outburst of young and undisciplined enthusiasm, but the honest expression of a many-sided debt, the genuine recognition of those whose lives have been touched to some new issues by what you have taught them. They do not presume to speak of, or to estimate, your place in English Literature. They merely tell you, by this proffered honour—the highest in their power to bestow—how they have felt your influence over them. . . .’

The students failed to induce him to depart from his resolution not to speak in public; but they were received with such urbanity and friendliness that they returned in a state of intense delight. Before they left, Browning presented each member of the deputation

poets and literary critics, asking their opinion. Browning wrote as follows :

19 Warwick Crescent, W. : July 9, 1880.

‘ You pay me a compliment in caring for my opinion, but, such as it is, a very decided one it must be. On every account, your method of giving the original text, and subjoining in a note the variations, each with its proper date, is incontestably preferable to any other. It would be so, if the variations were even improvements—there would be pleasure as well as profit in seeing what was good grow visibly better. But, to confine ourselves to the single “ proof ” you have sent me, in every case the change is sadly for the worse : I am quite troubled by such spoiling of passage after passage as I should have chuckled at had I chanced upon them in some copy, pencil-marked with corrections by Jeffrey or Gifford ; indeed, they are nearly as wretched as the touchings-up of the *Siege of Corinth* by the latter. If ever diabolic agency was caught at tricks with “ apostolic ” achievement (see page 9)—and “ apostolic,” with no “ profanity ” at all, I esteem these poems to be—surely you may bid it “ aroint ” “ about and all about ” these desecrated stanzas ; each of which however, thanks to your piety, we may hail I trust with a hearty

Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;
Nor be less dear to future men
Than in old time !

. . . .’

His next letter refers to the following incident. When staying at Malvern in the autumn of 1880, I found that

a water-colour artist living in Worcester had taken two lovely drawings of the old Manor House of Hope End, near Ledbury, which was Mrs. Browning's (then Elizabeth Barrett's) residence for many years, where she wrote *The Lost Bower*, and others of her lyrics and sonnets. I had myself been hunting for 'the Lost Bower' for two days amongst the underwood of that delightful valley, so wonderfully described by her :

Green the land is where my daily
Steps in jocund childhood played,
Dimpled close with hill and valley,
Dappled very close with shade,

Summer snow of apple-blossoms running up from glade to glade.

Hope End I found to be a fine old Moorish structure, now alas ! converted into stables by one who bought the property, and erected a modern mansion upon it. I purchased the water-colour drawings from the Worcester artist, but felt that I ought not to keep them. I sent them to Browning, and this was his reply :

' 19 Warwick Crescent, W. : December 2, 1880.

' I shall not attempt to say how grateful I am for your kindness.

' With your generous permission, I retain the two drawings, as they show the house with its summer aspect ; the photographs (which I beg your acceptance of, in separate packet) were taken just before the destruction of it, and in consequence of its having been determined upon. They are bare prosaic things, and the surroundings are wintry enough ; but it is all I thought to see of Hope End till your present came to help my

mind's eye. Believe me—I repeat—very gratefully yours.'

In the year 1882 Lord Coleridge was the president of the Wordsworth Society. We met in the hall of the Freemasons' Tavern, London. The Chief Justice was detained in his Law Court far past the hour at which we had to commence proceedings, and there were many important papers to be read. Our committee (including Browning) were in an ante-room waiting somewhat impatiently. At last I received a courier message from our president: 'Detained for half an hour; begin without me.' The large audience in the hall expressed unmistakably their annoyance at our delay. I went up to Browning and said, 'You must take the chair, and let us begin.' He replied, 'Impossible; I never took the chair at a meeting in my life, nor can I speak in public; impossible.' I replied that it was equally impossible for any other of the committee to take the chair in the presence of its most distinguished member. He resisted, but I said, 'Just step into the chair and say, "I am *locum tenens* for Lord Coleridge," and I shall manage all the rest.' He replied, 'I'll do it,' and we walked in; he took the chair, and said exactly these words, and I believe that—with the exception of a similar short utterance in Edinburgh—it was the only sentence he ever spoke in public. I may say that his delight at some of the papers read at that meeting was great. In half an hour Coleridge came in and relieved him from the position of chairman, to his great satisfaction.

The next letter refers to a request that he would honour our Wordsworth Society in 1883 by either contributing a paper, or saying something about his great predecessor at our meeting that year. It gives a characteristic revelation of one who was considered so much a man of society (which he certainly was), but was also most reluctant to be dragged into the light of day.

In the letter to which this is a reply I had mentioned having found in the autobiography of Haydon the following reference to the one of his five portraits of Wordsworth, on which Mrs. Browning wrote the sonnet beginning, 'Wordsworth upon Helvellyn.'

'October 1842.—He sent . . . to Miss E. B. Barrett . . . the portrait of Wordsworth on Helvellyn painted this year.' The sonnet followed: and then, on June 18, 1846, just four days before his melancholy end, the following sentence occurs in his journal: 'I sent . . . Wordsworth . . . to Miss Barrett *to protect*;' while in his will there is the entry, 'I leave MSS. and my memoirs in the possession of Miss Barrett.'

I asked whether he knew to what portrait Haydon referred. Browning replied:

'19 Warwick Crescent, W.: July 27, 1882.

'Your very kind letter has been far too long unanswered, really from the repugnance I feel at being obliged to withhold any absolute promise to contribute a paper to the *Transactions*: if I find I can, you shall know; I engage so far. "Vain aspiration of an earnest will!"

'I remember all those sad circumstances connected with the last doings of poor Haydon. He never saw my wife, but interchanged letters with her occasionally. On visiting her the day before the painter's death, I found her room occupied by a quantity of studies; sketches and portraits, which, together with paints, palettes and brushes, he had chosen to send in apprehension of an arrest, or at all events an "execution" in his own house. The letter which apprised her of this step said, in excuse of it, "they may have a right to my goods; they can have none to my mere work-tools and necessities of existence," or words to that effect. The next morning I read the news in the *Times*, and myself hastened to break the news at Wimpole Street, but had been anticipated. Every article was at once sent back, no doubt. I do not remember noticing Wordsworth's portrait. It certainly never belonged to my wife at any time. She possessed an engraving of the Head—I suppose a gift from poor Haydon.'

The following explains itself. I tried hard to get him to abandon his resolution not to read or speak at our meeting in 1883. He said he would come to the Abbey, since Matthew Arnold was to preside and Ruskin would possibly attend, but he could take no public part in our proceedings.

'19 Warwick Crescent, W.: March 21, 1883.

'I so hate saying "no" to a request from you—the kinder and more gracious the request, the harder its evasion or refusal,—that I have let the days go on until,

being forced to reply to a somewhat similar demand just made on me, I asked myself whether it would not be a wiser economy of pain to at once assure you that, for many reasons, I am quite unable to do even the poor little service to that great memory of Wordsworth which you honour me by supposing I might render. I do increasingly feel (cowardly as seems the avowal) the need of keeping the quiet corner in the world's van which I have got used to for so many years. "This comes too near the explaining of myself"; and you will therefore let me begin, and end, by saying with all sincerity, that I am gratefully and humbly, yours ever. . . .'

This letter reached me before our meeting took place :

' 19 Warwick Crescent, W. : May 1, 1883.

' I am really thankful for the opportunity of at once acquainting you with the reason which—to my great regret—will prevent me from being present to-morrow at the meeting in the Abbey. I had so counted upon attending that I refused an invitation to dinner on the day in question, lest the necessity of returning home should oblige me to curtail my stay—as was the case last year. But I am, quite unexpectedly, obliged to go to Oxford and attend at Balliol. I can only repeat my assurance that my regret is extreme, and beg you to believe me yours most truly.'

In 1884 our St. Andrews students made another attempt to induce Browning to become their Lord Rector, the year in which Lord Reay was subsequently chosen.

I had written to tell him of this persistent undergraduate wish to see him in office here ; and, in the same letter, I asked him if he could tell me anything about Mr. Kenyon, the 'cousin' and 'friend' to whom *Aurora Leigh* is dedicated. This was because a London barrister, Mr. Hutchings, had kindly sent me some sixteen letters of Wordsworth's to Mr. Kenyon, that I might make use of them in my *Life* of the poet, or in the *Transactions of the Wordsworth Society*. Mr. Hutchings had suggested that I might ask Browning for a brief notice of Kenyon, which might serve as a sort of thread on which the letters might be strung. He had received the letters in 1880 from Mr. George Booth, son of Mr. James Booth, C.B., at one time counsel to the Speaker in the House of Commons, and residuary legatee to Mr. Kenyon.

Browning replied as follows. [I may be forgiven for not omitting the P.S., from the way in which it indicates his view of the Hereafter.]

' 19 Warwick Crescent, W. : Jan. 10, 1884.

' All thanks for your letter with the good wishes, which I heartily reciprocate. The honour of standing for the Lord Rectorship was, by the same post, proposed to me as you expected, and very respectfully (in no conventional sense) declined as on former occasions. I am glad to see that Lord Reay is again a candidate ;¹ no fitter one could be suggested.

¹ This should have been written ' is again proposed.' The Scottish Lord Rectors do not become candidates, but are selected by the students, and brought forward by them.

'With respect to the information you desire about Mr. Kenyon; all that I do "know of him better than anybody," perhaps, is his great goodness to myself; singularly little respecting his early life came to my knowledge. He was the cousin of Mr. Barrett; second cousin, therefore, of my wife, to whom he was ever deeply attached. I first met him at a dinner of Serjeant Talfourd's, after which he drew his chair by mine and inquired whether my father had been his old school-fellow and friend at Cheshunt: adding that, in a poem just printed, he had commemorated their playground fights, armed with sword and shield, as Achilles and Hector, some half-century before. On telling this to my father at breakfast next morning, he at once, with a pencil, sketched me the boy's handsome face—still distinguishable in the elderly gentleman's I had made acquaintance with. Mr. Kenyon at once renewed his own with my father, and became my fast friend: hence my introduction to Miss Barrett. He was one of the best of human beings, with a general sympathy for excellence of every kind. He enjoyed the friendship of Wordsworth, of Southey, of Landor; and, in later days, was intimate with most of my own contemporaries of eminence. I believe that he was born in the West Indies, whence his property was derived, as was that of Mr. Barrett; persistently styled a "merchant" by biographers who will not take the pains to do more than copy the blunders of their forerunners in the business of article-mongery. He was twice married, but left no family: I should suggest Mr. Scharf (of the

National Portrait Gallery) as a far more qualified informant on all such matters; my own concern having mainly been with his exceeding goodness to me, and mine: and all you can say in his praise will be thoroughly warranted, I am sure.

‘ Ever yours, * *

‘ P.S. I open the envelope to say—what I had nearly omitted—that Lord Coleridge proposed, and my humble self, at his desire, seconded you, last evening, for admission to the “Athenæum.” I had the less scruple in offering my services that you will most likely never see in the offer anything but a record of my respect and regard, since your election will come on, when I shall be—dare I hope? “elect”—in even a higher society! —R. B.’

In the same year our Wordsworth Society met under the presidency of Lord Houghton at his sister’s house, and some of the members renewed the request of 1882, that he should move the customary vote of thanks to the chairman. This was declined by Browning, and Mr. James Bryce, M.P., took his place. He afterwards wrote as follows :

‘ 19 Warwick Crescent, W.: May 9, 1884.

‘ I seem ungracious and ungrateful, but am neither, though, now that your festival is over, I wish I could have overcome my scruples and apprehensions. It is hard to say—when kind people press one to “just speak for a minute”—that the business, so easy to almost anybody, is too bewildering for oneself.’

In the following year he wrote, enclosing some letters of his wife's in reference to Wordsworth. He also, in the same letter, promised to select and send a list of the poems which struck him 'as those worthiest of the master.' This was in response to a request made to him, and to some other members of the Wordsworth Society, to make selections with a view to publication. This was his letter :

' 19 Warwick Crescent, W : August 10, 1885.

' Now that I have found the letters—of which all my knowledge was that they somewhere existed—they prove to be so unimportant and uncharacteristic of anything but the writer's good nature, that I can hardly think you will care to make use of them. This is, however, your affair ; mine being simply to redeem my promise of submitting them to you, which is done accordingly. You will have the goodness to return them in any case.

' I will, as you desire, attempt to pick out the twenty poems which strike me (and so as to take away my breath !) as those worthiest of the master. I deprecate all charges of presumption, but will very humbly give my poor opinion for what it is worth.

' I was exceedingly sorry to be absent from the meeting of the Society, but had an old engagement which I could not escape.'

It was followed by two other letters later on :

' 19 Warwick Crescent, W. : November 30, 1885.

' Your letter of the first was, after some delay, duly forwarded to me at Venice, whence I have just returned.

At Venice—where was a complete edition of Wordsworth to be found, or even hoped for? and, without such a necessary assistance, I was unable to comply with your request and attempt the selection you engage me to furnish. Pray forgive what has been anything but neglect on my part. I come home to plenty of matters claiming prompt attention; and an off-hand profession of choice in such a matter would be too foolishly presumptuous: but, if you will indulge me yet a little longer, I will do my best—whatever may be its worth—and submit my preferences to your judgment. The edition I shall use is that belonging to my wife—pencil-marked throughout, in which circumstance there may lie some help to me.

‘The letters, I should mention, came safely.—R. B.’

‘19 Warwick Crescent, W: February 24, 1886.

‘I have kept you waiting this long while—and for how shabby a result! You must listen indulgently while I attempt to explain why I am forced to disappoint you. One remembers few more commonplace admonitions to a poet than that he would wiselier have written but a quarter of the works which he has laboured at for a lifetime; unless it be this other, often coupled with it: that such works ought to be addressed to the general apprehension, not exclusively suited to the requirements of a (probably quite imaginary) few. Each precept contradicts the other. Write, on set purpose, for the many, and you will soon enough be reminded of the old *quot homines* and write as conscientiously for the few—your idealised “double” (it comes to that)—and

you may soon suit him with the extremely little that suits yourself.

‘Now, in view of which of these objects should the maker of a selection of the works of any poet worth the pains begin his employment? I have myself attempted the business, and know something of the achievements in this kind of my betters. They furnish a list of the pieces which the selector has found most delight in: and I found also that others, playing the selector with apparently as good a right and reason, were dissatisfied with this unaccountable addition, that as inexplicable omission; in short, that the sole selector was not himself: the only case in which no such stumbling-block occurs being that obvious one—if it has ever occurred—when a public wholly unacquainted with an author is presumed to be accessible to a specimen of his altogether untried productions; for, by chance-medley, a sample of the poetry of Brown and Jones may pierce the ignorance of somebody, say of Robinson.

‘It is quite another matter of interest to know what Matthew Arnold thinks most worthy in Wordsworth: but should anybody have curiosity to inquire which “15 or 20” of his poems have most thoroughly impressed such an one as myself, all I can affirm is that I treasure as precious every poem written during about the first twenty years¹ of the poet’s life: after these, the solution grows weaker, the crystals gleam more rarely, and the assiduous stirring-up of the mixture is too apparent and

So it is written, but he meant forty, and afterwards in conversation put it at thirty-five.

obtrusive. To the end, crystals are to be come at; but my own experience resembles that of the old man in the admirable *Resolution and Independence* :

Once I could meet with them on every side,
But they have dwindled long by slow decay—
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may ;

that is; in the poet's whole work, which I should leave to operate in the world as it may, each recipient his own selector.

'I only find room to say that I was delighted to make acquaintance with your daughter, and that should she feel any desire to make that of my sister we shall welcome her gladly.'

I afterwards sent him a list of the poems chosen to be included in this volume of selections. He went over them with minute care, marking all those which he specially liked, and adding several which I had omitted. He then wrote as follows :

'19 Warwick Crescent, W.: March 23, 1887.

'I have seemed to neglect your commission shamefully enough, but I confess to a sort of repugnance to classifying the poems as even good and less good, because in my heart I fear I should do it almost chronologically—so immeasurably superior seem to me the "first sprightly runnings." Your selection would appear to be excellent, and the partial admittance of the latter work prevents one from observing the too definitely distinguishing black line between supremely good and—well, what is fairly tolerable—from Wordsworth, always

understand ! I have marked a few of the early poems not included in your list : I could do no other when my conscience tells me that I never can be tired of loving them—while, with the best will in the world, I could never do more than try hard to like them. You see, I go wholly upon my individual likings and distastes ; that other considerations should have their weight with other people is natural and inevitable.

‘Many thanks for the volume just received—that with the correspondence. I hope that you will restore the swan-simile so ruthlessly cut away from *Dion*.’

The following is the list of Wordsworth’s ‘early poems,’ referred to in the preceding letter, marked by Browning, which he ‘never could be tired of loving,’ but ‘could never do more than try hard to like’ : *The Reverie of Poor Susan ; Goody Blake and Harry Gill ; The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman ; The Danish Boy, a Fragment ; Rob Roy’s Grave ; The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale ; Power of Music ; Stargazers ; Dion ; The Eclipse of the Sun, 1820 ; A Jewish Family*.

Two days later came the following, indicating misprints in the volume of the Wordsworth Society *Transactions* for the year :

‘19 Warwick Crescent, W. : March 25, 1887.

‘Do you observe two noteworthy misprints in the *Transactions* ?

‘Page 189, penultimate line: “the younger critics require higher reasoning than I can give.” Surely, “seasoning”? And, worse still, page 182:

But why be so glad on
His feats or his fall?
His got his red ribbon
And laughs at us all.

‘Read “glib on,” *meo periculo*!—rhyme, reason, and grammar demanding the change.

‘You got, I hope, my letter with the previous number of the *Transactions*.’

This led to some correspondence as to misprints. I told him of the trouble which many had over *Sordello*, because of its errors in punctuation; and asked him whether there was not a misprint in the song in *Pippa Passes*, beginning,

All service ranks the same with God;

‘than’ being printed, when it should have been ‘that.’ Pippa’s song is familiar, but may be quoted:

All service ranks the same with God:
If now, as formerly he trod
Paradise, his presence fills
Our earth, each only as God wills
Can work—God’s puppets, best and worst,
Are we; there is no last nor first.
Say not ‘a small event’! Why ‘small’?
Costs it more pain that this, ye call
A ‘great event’ should come to pass,
Than that? Untwine me from the mass
Of deeds which make up life, one deed
Power shall fall short in, or exceed!

Well, the eighth line is printed 'than this' instead of 'that this.' The following was his reply :

' 19 Warwick Crescent, W. : April 7, 1887.

'The misprint of "than" for "that" struck me long ago ; unluckily the present edition is *stereotyped*, hardly admitting of a change. On referring to the original edition, I observe the passage runs

Costs it more pain—the thing ye call &c.

'I shall probably restore this, which seems better than the alteration.

'My experience of printers' errors is considerable. Presupposing due care on the corrector's part ; any subsequent misplacement of the types is readjusted by the printer as he best can, without the troublesome reference to the "Reader." Again ; writers of verse are particularly subject to an accident of less importance in prose—the dropping out of the stop at the end of the line ; which, omitted, makes the sense (or nonsense) run into the following one. This occurs again and again in my own books, through no fault of mine, and is never noticed ; so acute are the critics !

'I am glad you are coming here in May, and shall be happy to see you again.'

Browning once said to me that all the unintelligibility of *Sordello* was due to the printers. They would change his punctuation, and not print his own commas, semicolons, dashes, and brackets.

He wrote :

‘ 29 De Vere Gardens, W. : May 8, 1888.

‘ Thank you heartily for your kindest of notes. I only wish I could have seen you, and assured you by word of mouth how much I value your friendship and reciprocate your good wishes.

‘ We have been somewhat unfortunate in regard to Miss Knight, who has called here and found nobody ; will she think it worth while to try again and gratify us ? ’

In June 1888 Browning wrote thus to a friend. The opinion expressed is a curious one, but it is reproduced merely because it was his :

‘ 29 De Vere Gardens, W.

. . . ‘ I am delighted to hear that there is a likelihood of your establishing yourself in London, and illustrating literature as happily as you have expounded philosophy. It is certainly the right order of things, philosophy first, and poetry—which is its highest outcome—afterwards ; and much harm has been done by reversing the natural process.’

In the beginning of the same month I visited Florence for the first time, before attending the octocentenary of the University of Bologna. I spent a fortnight in the fair Tuscan city, during which time George Eliot’s *Romola*, Ruskin’s *Mornings in Florence*, and Browning’s Poems were to me, as they have been to so many, instructors and guides. Before leaving

I went out to the Protestant cemetery and laid a laurel wreath on the grave of Walter Savage Landor, another on the last resting-place of Arthur Hugh Clough, and a large Florentine lily on Mrs. Browning's tomb. On the same day I wrote to Browning, to tell him of my visit, and what I owed to him in Florence. As he kept my letters, and his son has returned them to me, I may perhaps include this one, along with his reply to it:

' Florence, June 10, 1888.

' I have been six days in Florence, but they have been as six years of new experience. It is my first visit to this fairest of cities, and the hours have passed in one long apocalypse of beauty and of glory. As it is to you and Mrs. Browning, along with Ruskin and George Eliot, that I owed most of my knowledge of Florence before I came to it, I follow the instinct which impels me to write to you before I leave the city for Bologna.

' I have risen each morning at four o'clock, and have been both to San Miniato and Fiesole at dawn. I have climbed Giotto's tower, and Brunelleschi's dome at sunset. I have studied with wondering delight the frescoes in Santa Croce, the Carmine, and Santa Maria Novella, revisiting each three times; and lingered long in the Uffizi and the Pitti galleries. The Duomo has fascinated me with the splendour of its architecture and its music. The Donatellos round San Michele, the Luca della Robbias everywhere, and the works of three great Tuscan masters scarcely known to me before—

Verrocchio, Rossellino, and Rovezzano—the Bargello, and the Ghiberti gates, have revealed much; but the Giotto's, the Botticellis, the Andrea del Sarto's, and the Masaccios, these have magnetised me. I have had wonderful weather. The nightingales, and fireflies in the Boboli gardens, have added an element new and delightful beyond words, while each day I have had a swim in the waters of the Arno.

‘I stood a long time before the house in Casa Guidi, but did not enter it. To-day, however—almost my last act before leaving the city—I went out to the English cemetery, and laid a large white lily on that tomb which will for generations be a place of reverent pilgrimage to many; placing also a laurel branch on Clough's grave, and another on Walter Savage Landor's.

‘Over and over again, during these days of perpetual delight and continuous revelation, I have turned to your and Mrs. Browning's words; and have found that by means of them, for me in this place “the fountains of the great deep were broken up.” In no other city is it so easy as in Florence to go back into the past; and during any of these days it would have seemed quite natural to have met Dante or Giotto on the Ponte Vecchio, or Savonarola and Michael Angelo at some street corner. But this too I am constrained to say, that in no burial-place in the world have the same emotions of reverence and thanksgiving been felt by me, except at Stratford-on-Avon and at Grasmere. Forgive me for saying so much. . . .’

To this Browning replied :

‘ 29 De Vere Gardens, W. : June 19, 1888.

‘ Many thanks for your exceedingly kind and highly interesting letter. It was good of you to think so much of my wife and myself amid the excitement attending a first visit to the city we loved so well. I should have much enjoyed talking over the present and past condition of Florence with you, but I leave this afternoon for Oxford, where I pass the rest of the week, and can only regret that I may thereby lose the great pleasure of seeing you here. Would you have the goodness to mention to Lord Coleridge that I am obliged to be absent from the meeting of the Arnold Memorial Committee appointed for to-morrow—Commemoration Day.’

When I next met him he said, in happy hyperbole, ‘ Well ! You did as much in Florence in a week as my wife and I tried to do in a year.’ I replied, ‘ It was all too crowded, but thanks to you for enabling me to do it. Your poems, and the other books I mentioned gave me the key, and opened up the innumerable treasures of the place.’

I have known no one so completely indifferent to fame as Browning was, while he knew very well the value of the work he did. He never wrote a line of poetry with a view to posthumous renown, or thought much of anything he composed after it was written down, as Wordsworth and Tennyson did. The imperious call

of a commanding genius very soon compelled him to take up other themes; and that may in part explain how so many of his poems have their obscurities, and ragged edges, and what Americans call 'snags.' He could not, or would not, go back upon them, and take time to polish them, even although he could have done it so easily with the diamond dust of his own genius. He at once forgot them, and was away in other fields of thought, imagination, and fancy; but I think it was his genuine appreciation of the work of others that made him so callous to contemporary verdicts on himself.

He received many letters from admirers and friends asking the meaning of obscure passages in his poems; he was too courteous to resent inquiry, but he seldom satisfied the querists. He would sometimes reply, 'Well! I know the poem had a meaning to me when I wrote it, but what it was I cannot now say. I have passed from it long ago.' *Childe Roland to the dark tower came*, and *Another Way of Love*, were two poems in reference to which he would not give explanations.

I once ventured, after a talk about six of his poems—*Christina*, *Evelyn Hope*, *The Last Ride Together*, *Prospice*, *La Saisiaz*, and *Abt Vogler*—to ask him if he could not give the world a poem bearing still more explicitly on the survival of the individual. He said (what I well knew) that he could not write to order. No poet ever did so; or, if he did, what he wrote would not deserve to live, but would be fore-doomed to extinction; but that possibly the mood would return to him in which

that great problem would find new utterance. When, however, he asked me what it was that I wished, in addition to what he had already said in the six poems we had been talking about, I found it difficult to tell him. I only said that while he and Tennyson had helped us in many ways as to the *ultimata* of theistic belief, neither in *In Memoriam* nor in any of his own poems had we an articulate poetic statement of the grounds on which the belief in Immortality rests. I indicated my own difficulty, and said that if we are warranted in believing in posthumous existence, might we not also be warranted in surmising pre-existence; especially since, if we are to survive this life, when we do so pre-existence will have been a fact. He agreed; and said he would like to take pre-existence as the subject of a poem; because, if it could be proved, it would carry the evidence of immortality upbound with it. But, he added, in language very similar to that of Cardinal Newman, 'As to immortality I don't need arguments; I know it by intuition, which is superior to proof.' He went on to say, 'You know my wife's lines in *Aurora Leigh*, on the evidence of intuition, and "the Hereafter";' and, taking up a volume of her poems lying on his desk, he read [and I think he read his wife's poems better than he read his own]:

I thought so. All this anguish in the thick
Of men's opinions . . . press and counterpress,
Now up, now down, now underfoot, and now
Emergent . . . all the best of it, perhaps,
But throws you back upon a noble trust
And use of your own instinct,—merely proves
Pure reason stronger than bare inference

I.

H

At strongest. Try it,—fix against heaven's wall
 The scaling-ladders of school logic—mount,
 Step by step!—sight goes faster; that still ray
 Which strikes out from you, how you cannot tell,
 And why you know not, (did you eliminate,
 That such as you indeed should analyse?)
 Goes straight and fast as light, and high as God.

The cygnet finds the water, but the man
 Is born in ignorance of his element
 And feels out blind at first, disorganised
 By sin i' the blood,—his spirit-insight dulled,
 And crossed by his sensations. Presently
 He feels it quicken in the dark sometimes,
 When, mark, be reverent, be obedient,
 For such dumb motions of imperfect life
 Are oracles of vital Deity
 Attesting the Hereafter. Let who says,
 'The soul's a clean white paper,' rather say
 A palimpsest, a prophet's holograph
 Defiled, erased and covered by a monk's,—
 The Apocalypse by a Longus! poring on
 Which obscene text we may discern perhaps
 Some fair, fine trace of what was written once,
 Some upstroke of an alpha and omega
 Expressing the old scripture.

I once called at Warwick Crescent on Browning's birthday, but had forgotten the anniversary. The house was a garden of choicest flowers, a very 'paradise of dainty devices.' They were in the hall, up the staircase, in the library, in the drawing-room; and 'most,' he said, 'from unknown friends, nearly all from unknown friends. How strange it is!' On that occasion he asked me, 'Are you any relation of a Mr. Knight, who used to live at Wimbledon forty years ago?' I said, 'No; I have relatives in and near London, but none at

Wimbledon.' He went on, however, for nearly ten minutes to talk of this old friend of his, who must have been a remarkable man, and then said, 'How strange! I knew him four decades ago, and I have never once recalled all these things I have been telling you till to-day, when they came back to me in a rush of memory when speaking to you.'

I frequently walked with Browning from his house at Warwick Crescent across Kensington Gardens to the residence of Mrs. Procter—the widow of his old friend Barry Cornwall—at the Albert Mansions. He used to call there whenever he could manage it. Mrs. Procter told me that he missed few Sunday afternoons. She was herself a remarkable woman, a brilliant talker who never monopolised conversation. She rejoiced to recall the days when she knew Charles Lamb, Wordsworth, Landor, and the rest; but she was not ambitious of being herself much 'in evidence.' She was the daughter of Wordsworth's friend and boy-pupil, Basil Montagu, and mother of the well-known Catholic hymn-writer, Adelaide Anne Procter. It was specially interesting to hear Browning and Mrs. Procter discuss the days and the fellowships of old, and to hear him read his own poems to his friend. His reading was not so musical as Tennyson's, but it was clearer and crisper, and had occasionally a torrent rush. With more *élan*, variety and fulness of melody, it was suggestive of a richer and more many-sided life. Its cadences were once described to me as like the pianoforte-playing of Liszt.

As it may be known to few, it is worth mentioning that the following was written by Browning on the MS. of his *Paracelsus*, which is preserved in the South Kensington Museum: 'To John Forster, Esq. (my only understander), with true thanks for his generous and seasonable public confession of faith in me.—R. B.'

Browning could be the most reserved of men, and was so to those from whom he felt that a moral barrier separated him; but he was often the most unreserved of conversationalists. I sometimes thought that he lost all sense of the listener, and his wonderful speech was merely thinking aloud.

In conclusion, something may be said about his funeral in Westminster Abbey. It was not like a funeral at all. It was rather like the enthronement of a mighty potentate—or king in the realm of song—amongst his peers in the Poets' Corner of the historic Abbey. As the pall-bearers moved slowly from the entrance door of the Deanery, through the cloisters, into and along the nave and choir to the southern transept where he lies, in all the vast assemblage of representative men and women—statesmen of both Houses, lawyers, men of letters and of science, historians, heads of colleges, artists, pressmen, musicians, dramatists, literary workers of every kind, politicians of every school, and clergy of all denominations—*there was no sign of grief*. It was instinctively felt that Browning's work was done, and had been right nobly done, that he had accomplished his allotted task, that his life had rounded itself to a perfect close. Why, therefore, should there

be any sorrow felt, or mourning possible? It was the triumphal procession of a monarch to his throne; and a longer stay in this terrene sphere would have been a loss to posterity rather than a gain. I think I interpret the thoughts and feelings of the company gathered in the Abbey on that occasion—one in some respects more interesting than were the funerals of Tennyson and of Gladstone—when I say that its predominant note was one of gladness and victory, of great work grandly done, of achievement nobly realised, of happy rest from labour, while his work followed, as it still does, and, *me judice*, will continue to do *in sæcula sæculorum*.

JAMES MARTINEAU

In this retrospect I do not try to estimate Martineau's philosophical and religious position, or to trace the numerous and varied relations which he sustained to his contemporaries. His life has been recently written with great care and notable success, by those selected by his family and executors to discharge the honourable duty. A few supplementary 'reminiscences' and *memorabilia* may, however, be given.

I had the privilege of his friendship for forty-three years, and the letters I received from him amounted to 109. Copies of 100 of these I sent to his biographers; the other nine I issued a few years ago, along with some of my own to which they were replies, in a volume entitled *Inter Amicos*. They were essay-letters on the questions which lie on the threshold or borderland between the Trinitarian and Unitarian faith. Martineau was as generous of himself in correspondence as Ruskin was. While often reserved in speech, when he took his pen in hand this reserve was abandoned, and he poured out his thoughts and feelings freely.

My introduction to him was due to the admiration I felt when a young man for his *Endeavours after the Christian Life*. I knew that he was coming for an

autumn sojourn to country-quarters in the West of Scotland, not far from where I would be spending a few weeks of holiday. I met him on his arrival at Greenock along with his family, and went with them down the Clyde, in a six hours' sail to Ardrishaig. During that voyage he spoke continuously on the chief problems of philosophical and religious interest, and from the first I was struck by the rare union in him of great intellectual insight, and the power of a commanding character, with humility and the non-assertion of himself—a unique combination. After that interview my admiration broadened and deepened, and correspondence began. A year afterwards I visited him in London; but I pass over these days, when he was so genial a host, and took me as a fellow guest to many of his friends' houses in town. I owed much to these introductions.

Later on it occurred to me that—as all the Churches were so much his debtors, I might try in a humble way to advance the fellowship after which he strove by addressing his congregation in London, and promoting unity while not concealing difference. I did so; but proceedings were at once taken against me in the Church to which I then belonged. The controversy was a long one. Its records fill hundreds of pages of newspaper reports, but the prosecution failed. Then followed an article in the *Contemporary Review* on 'The Ethics of Creed Subscription,' in which I tried to show that no creed could be without a flaw; and that in all of them the subscriber expresses a general assent to underlying

principles rather than adherence to infallible *dicta*, or finally established propositions. This led to a second ecclesiastical arraignment, with the same result. A third one followed on the controversy as to Prayer, in which I tried to show in the columns of the same Review—in reply to Professor Tyndall and others—that prayer had a valid sphere of its own within the soul of man, but that it was invalid in the sphere of physical nature; and that, if it presumed to request an alteration of those laws which were the outcome of Divine adjustment, it was irreverent. This led to much controversy; and the Chancellor of our University—the Duke of Argyll—replied to my paper in the next number of the Review, in an article entitled ‘Prayer: the two Spheres; are they two?’, and I to him in the one following, ‘Prayer: the two Spheres; they are two.’ The result of the controversy was my voluntary abandonment of the tie which had bound me to the Church of my fathers. I mention these *personalia* without further detail, merely because they explain allusions in Dr. Martineau’s letters, both in *Inter Amicos* and in the following pages.

He then urged me to come up to London and succeed him at Little Portland Street, where I would be absolutely unfettered as a teacher. I explained to him that it was an impossibility, and he saw it, and acquiesced. Soon afterwards he resigned his ministerial position, confining himself to professorial duties, and afterwards to those of the principalship of Manchester New College. At this stage I may mention one fact,

which shows the width of his nature and the catholicity of his heart. He said to me, 'I go each Sunday morning to the dear old chapel in Little Portland Street, where I worshipped and taught so long, but it is not enough for me; and I find that I must go down in the afternoons to Westminster, where I hear the Anglican Service, and can sometimes hear the Dean.' I think it was Stanley's personality, to a certain extent, that drew him to the Abbey.

After this I saw Martineau chiefly at his summer retreats in Yorkshire and in Scotland, most of all at the Polchar in the Rothiemurchus district of Inverness-shire. Space and time would fail to tell of many delightful days and evenings there, ascending mountains, roaming in the forest-ways, and listening to his varied talk. A single experience only I may mention. It was planned one year that during my visit we should ascend Ben-muich-dhu; and, as Mr. Seeley (the historian) and Mr. Oscar Browning were staying near at hand, that they should join our party. We drove so far through the pine forest of Rothiemurchus, and thereafter had an ascending walk of ten miles to the summit of the mountain, and a similar descent of ten miles to the forest. Martineau was approaching eighty years of age; but, as a young-old-man, was now in a mood of inspired soliloquy, now discussing Hegel and Darwin, again rapt in silent sympathy with Nature, feeling the 'strength of the hills' around, and the glory of the sky above him. He was the fleetest of foot amongst us, and was first at the summit of the mighty ben. Others of

the party, though junior, took more frequent rests, and examined their aneroids, while he was treading the heather and facing the breeze. The views of Braeriach and Cairntoul near at hand, of Ben-y-Gloe to the south, of Ben Alder and the Ben Nevis range to the west, were magnificent that day, and he could name the majority of peaks and tell their heights. He used to delight to take his friends shorter walks in that Rothiemurchus district, to the top of Ord Ban (the white hill) which I ascended with him when he was eighty-five years of age, round by Loch-an-eilan (the island loch), a favourite stroll, and one of the very few places in Scotland where the osprey is still to be seen. At the Polchar our conversation often turned to his own early life and education. I now wish that I had written down what he told me.

When he was my guest at St. Andrews I was greatly struck with Martineau's power of entering for the time being, with rare appreciativeness, into the position of others from whom he stood widely apart in theological thought, while he held to his own position, and defended it with firmness, although with unobtrusive courtesy. He was much interested in meeting our two Principals, Tulloch and Shairp, and others whom he had known only as authors.

We frequently talked of the titles of his books, especially of the one which he called *A Study of Religion, its Sources and Contents*. In this connection one may recall the singular felicity of the titles of many of his sermons, in the *Endeavours after the Christian*

Life, such, *e.g.*, as 'The Strength of the Lonely,' 'The Besetting God,' 'Great Hopes for Great Souls,' 'The Sphere of Silence,' &c. Some think that his best work was done in these wonderful addresses, sermons esoteric and exoteric, delivered week by week for many a year, in the chapel which he made famous; and, in now reading these *Endeavours*, and his subsequent *Hours of Thought* one can understand the magnetism which drew so many from far suburban places to hear him, to be taught by him, and sent on their way to fruitful work. Perhaps the most distinctive note of his preaching was this. There was nothing set before his hearers which they *must* receive; only a few 'guide-posts' in Religion and Ethics were set up, and an indication given of the way in which the noblest spirits walk. He was great as a preacher because he was neither a doctrinaire expositor, nor a critical essayist. The listeners felt that the speaker lived in a region of intellectual and religious calm, far above the mists and miscellaneousness of our modern life, the vicissitudes and ambitions of the hour; and that, with his life rooted in the unseen, he was devoted continuously and unfalteringly to the noblest ends. The only thing that some felt *per contra* was the baffling effect produced at times by his exquisite metaphors, which turned the hearer aside for a time from the clear-cut path of his severer thought. His sermons were not so much addresses delivered to a group of listeners as oral communings with the unseen. He seldom seemed to realise that he had an audience before him; and while

'he brought out of his treasury things new and old,' he certainly spoke 'as one having authority, and not as the scribes.' If he 'wore his weight of learning lightly like a flower' (which he did), and lived out his deepest thoughts rather than write them down, it was the last thing anyone could think of him that he was a 'scribe.' His discourses were crowded with thoughts which transcended the commonplaces both of theology and religion, while he was in closest touch with their essentials. He dealt with the problems of all time; but, in setting them forth, he was never carried away by the torrent of his own utterance. There was no tumult in his eloquence.

The following extract¹ from one of the discourses in his *Endeavours*, entitled 'The Besetting God,' is a sample of the whole of them:

'As if in acknowledgment of the mystery of God, as if with an instinctive feeling that his being is the meeting-place of light and shade, and that in approaching Him we must stand on the confines between the seen and the unseen, all nations and all faiths have chosen the *twilight* hour, morning and evening, for their devotion; and so it has happened that all round the earth, on the bordering circle between the darkness and the day, a zone of worshippers has been ever spread, looking for the Almighty Tenant of space, one half toward the East brilliant with the dawn, the other into the hemisphere of night descending in the West. The veil of shadow as it shifts has glanced upon adoring souls, and at its touch cast down a fresh multitude to

¹ *Endeavours after the Christian Life*, vol. i. p. 24.

kneel, and as they have gazed into opposite regions for their God they have virtually owned his presence "besetting them behind and before."

What he quoted from John Smith, the Cambridge Platonist, so far back as 1836, remained with him a guiding principle to the end. It was this: 'To seek our Divinity merely in Books and Writings is to seek the living amongst the dead. No: *intra te quære Deum*. Seek for God within thy own soul.' More than once he quoted to me Kepler's great saying, 'My highest wish is to find within the God whom I find everywhere without'; although I told him I preferred the Neo-Platonic way of putting it, 'I have been all along trying to bring the God who is within me into harmony with the God who is without.' He had the mind of the seer, the enthusiasm of the mystic, and the heart of the child; and it was their wonderful combination that endeared him to so many. It came out in unexpected places, and un-anticipated ways. I remember calling at Gordon Square on a disengaged forenoon, when Mr. Emslie was painting his portrait. I was asked to sit and talk in the study while this was going on, as the artist seemed to think that conversation made his face more animated, and helped rather than hindered expression: and so I sat on for two hours, and can never forget the outflowings of philosophic talk on ancient sages and contemporary men, the subtle play of imagination and geniality of heart, then and there disclosed with unconscious ease and grace.

Perhaps the master-passion of Martineau's life was to

vindicate a pure spiritual theism against the materialistic and agnostic tendencies of our time; but it is a somewhat remarkable thing that he was an old man before his most distinctive works on Philosophy saw the light of day. He led a quiet life of strenuous endeavour for many years, and was known mainly as the author of the *Endeavours*, of a *Hymn-book*, and of several *Essays* and *Addresses*. As already mentioned, the superlative beauty and truth of the first of these fascinated several orthodox churchmen, who were more beholden to him than to many within their own communion; the great Anglican preacher—Robertson of Brighton—having assimilated his thoughts intuitively, and reproduced many of them, perhaps in clearer fashion. But until he ceased to preach, and even retired from his Chair, he had done little or nothing to show to his contemporaries the range of his philosophical knowledge, or the penetration of his speculative insight. He then expanded, and put into book-form, his class-lectures on Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion; his *Types of Ethical Theory* being followed by two other books, *A Study of Religion*, and *The Seat of Authority*. In this late productiveness as a philosophical author he resembled Immanuel Kant, whose three great *Kritiken* were not published till he was relatively an old man. They had been thought out and developed in younger days, but were not sent to press till their author's face was turned 'towards the sunset.'

Something should be also said as to Martineau's power as a public speaker. His occasional contributions

to debate, at the annual congresses of the religious Community to which he belonged, were remarkable, and the deference with which his addresses were received by those in conference assembled was very striking. I heard several of them, and it was significant that while speaker after speaker had addressed the meeting and produced little effect, listlessness and absenteeism perhaps prevailing, when Martineau rose the members came back—like the senators in the House of Commons filling the chamber when a great statesman speaks—and there was the hushed silence of universal honour and respect, while the decision ultimately come to usually justified the view he took.

As to the value of his philosophical work, the question to be answered is not 'Did he solve the problems he discussed?' but 'How far did he stimulate his contemporaries, by sowing the seeds of fruitful thought and lofty endeavour?' Very few came into close personal contact with him without finding that 'virtue went forth from him'; only the penetration of his vision, and the logical force of his reasoning, were sometimes obscured by the very magic of his style, its consummate finish and suggestiveness. I would mention another thing, which was disclosed in his countenance and whole physiognomy, a rare combination which impressed everyone who came within the circle of his influence. It was the air of personal sadness stamped in the lines and furrows of his face. He showed an abounding and most contagious joy, when his countenance was relaxed by humour; but even when this feature dominated, it did not eclipse

what I can only call a certain awe-strickenness before the mysteries of the universe, while he clung to a philosophic faith in the divine order of the world, and its universal omnipresent Soul.

Associated with this, and very notable, was his firm belief in a future life, to succeed the present one of disaster and failure. His unfaltering hope was the continuation and expansion of what is now and here so incomplete, the coming realisation of our blasted mundane ideals. He felt, and often said to me, that any dimness of sight as to the future was due not to our difficulty in construing it, or to the want of evidence for it, but to the veils which so constantly overhang us, and hide the reality from our eyes. Starting from the moral and spiritual notion of man as now evolved, he thought that our latent capacities of attainment warranted belief in a future where attainment would be real.

He also used often to say that the belief in Immortality was only one part of a larger whole, viz. the spiritual interpretation of the universe; and that it could not only not be proved, but could not be made intelligible, to those who had no esoteric vision of the unseen.

I think heredity explains much in Martineau's life, and work, and tendencies. He was descended on one side from the old French Huguenot stock, and as he combined the best traditions of that race with an English Puritan inheritance, their union was significant. This perhaps led to a farther practical eclecticism, an unhesitating acceptance of the best results of German and Dutch criticism with a reverent clinging to those things

'which cannot be shaken, but remain.' He was so constructive in his thought and teaching, and so anxious to get through the sand and have his foot upon the rock, that a reader of his books often forgets to what school of thought the writer belonged.

I may not retrace ground which his biographers have occupied so well. Anything here is by way of supplement, as in the case of what is said of Carlyle, Tennyson, Browning, and Ruskin; and some things, on which I could fain enlarge but can only mention, are not much dealt with in the *Life and Letters*, e.g. his growing sympathy in later years with the Anglican National Establishment as a religious safeguard for the nation, and with the denominational school system; his appreciation of the good work done by those who laboured in spheres into which he could never enter. This ripened in him, after the practical failure of a scheme in which he took a deep interest, viz. the Federation of the Churches. The multitudinous divisions of Christendom harassed him, and he thought there might be some practicable method of common action; a *modus vivendi et agendi*, if not a plan of federation. He described himself as 'all his life a most unwilling nonconformist,' and wished the old historic Church of England so widened as to include many shut out by its formularies, if only they would come in. Received within the national Establishment and co-ordinated there, he thought there might be a new amalgamation of all the scattered fragments of church-life in the country.

He maintained, and reiterated over and over again, that in the depths of the religious life there are possibilities of fellowship which our ecclesiastical organisations disown, and which lie beneath the creeds. One of the most remarkable of his later essays was one which he described as a contribution to 'a way out of Trinitarian controversy.' In that essay he admitted a metaphysical doctrine of the Trinity, while ethically he was—during his whole career—closely kindred to its disciples. He taught that 'in what constitutes the pith and kernel of both faiths' (*i.e.* the Trinitarian and the Unitarian) 'the two are agreed.' Evidence of this will be found in his letters published in *Inter Amicos*, and not only in many of his discourses, but in the hymnals which he edited, and the prayer-books which he wrote and published.

It is a pleasant retrospect to recall many relatively minor traits in his character, his scrupulous accuracy in all details, and the very finished way in which he wrote the shortest and smallest of notes, answering an invitation to dinner or to a walk with the same fastidious carefulness in handwriting as that in which he composed his most elaborate books for the press. His library was always in perfect order ; and even the way in which at the Polchar he cut up the pages of the *Times*, and refolded them before he began to read, was a lesson in orderliness.

In what follows I shall give a series of extracts from a few of his many letters to me. I omit what were

perhaps the most interesting of them all—viz. those he wrote on receipt of the address presented to him on his eighty-first birthday—because it was published with the signatures appended to it in *Inter Amicos*, and also found a place in the *Life and Letters*, edited by Messrs. Drummond and Upton.

‘Dalguise House, near Dunkeld : July 11, 1871.

‘I am greatly obliged by the opportunity of reading your very interesting and searching article in the *British Quarterly*. With its constructive part I find myself in entire accord; unless it be that I should hesitate, as a matter of form, to treat the apprehension of God as an immediate intuition. Rather does it seem to me the necessary interpretation of two or three confluent intuitions,—of Causality, of Obligation, and of Beauty—of which it finds the unity and repose. This is rather a difference of statement, than of thought; and I do not know that there is anything to choose between the two modes of putting the case. But I fancy that the recognition of a plurality of sources enables one to give a better account of the broken lights of faith which gleam upon us in imperfect religions, short of the vision of the Living God. In the critical part of your paper you are a little more thorough-going than I am inclined to be, in your repudiation of the old Natural Theology; but most of the qualifications which I should insert in the critique come in afterwards in the constructive exposition.’

* Bryn Yr Afon, Bont Ddu, Dolgelly : August 21, 1872.

'Your Celtic scholarship will enable you to interpret, pronounce, and remember the queer address which I have given above, and at which I shall be found for more than a month to come. It represents a charming cottage usually occupied by my friends Miss Lloyd and Miss Cobbe, but vacated by them on our behalf for a few weeks this summer. The house stands just half-way between Barmouth and Dolgelly, right in front of Cader Idris, from which it is separated by the fine estuary that here inserts itself among the mountains just like the western seas of Scotland.

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'I return with thanks the Glasgow correspondence. It grieves rather than surprises me. The exposure by "Quisquis" appears to me amply merited; and the subsequent letter by . . . justifies the severest of the previous criticisms, by advancing a new plea quite at variance with his previous statement. A more humiliating self-exposure I do not remember. But it is well for the world that a man who has not conscience to be true should fail also to have the sense to be consistent.'

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* Bryn Yr Afon, Bont Ddu, Dolgelly : September 23, 1872.

'The breaking up of my few weeks' encampment here must not take place without my reporting the movement; though the moment for plucking up the tent-pegs, and strewing the ground with baggage for the start, is not favourable for more than a hasty message.

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'On Monday, the 30th inst., we rush home and into harness at once; the College opening at 9 A.M. on Tuesday, October 1. I am thankful to say we are all fairly ready for our season of work, and the unremitting circulation of interests and duties which makes one comparatively indifferent to the "skyey influences"; and certainly the clouds and storms of the last three weeks have done their best to discipline us into resignation at parting with a country of soaked soil, and dripping trees, and shrouded mountains. Nevertheless, we have found happy intervals for invading the tops, and exploring the most picturesque valleys.

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'In the presence of a saintly Calvinist, my shrinking from his theology fills me with misgivings of my own heart. But a . . . sets me firm on my feet again; and if I have ever said a strong thing against his system, I only wish it had been stronger. . . . Your statement seemed to me to be admirable in its terseness and its selection of essential points, as well as in its spirit; and indeed to have no fault but its extreme and severe brevity.'

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* 10 Gordon Street, London, W.C.: October 17, 1872.

'For the better economy of such activities as may still be entrusted to me, it is necessary for me to reduce my work; and, as the chief risk lies in strong excitement, I have resigned my pulpit, and limited myself for the future to my College work. It is no light thing thus suddenly to take leave of what has been to

me the chief function of life: but my main anxiety is the congregation which I am constrained to desert. Composed of elements without any strong principle of cohesion, and ranging through the theological scale from the borders of Positivism to conservative Christian Supernaturalism, it is exposed to peculiar risks of dispersion; and I feel no satisfaction in the prospect of a considerable detachment moving off to the influence of * * 's negations and * * 's cosmopolitan Pantheism. As I muse upon the matter, I come round again and again to the one only thing which, as I believe, would hold and save these people, and prevent the virtual sacrifice of their spiritual life: viz. your removal to London to take charge of them. It is a daring, and I fear an impracticable, thought. I see all the difficulty of such a move after so recent a declaration of Trinitarian opinion—though not as identified with Christianity, but only as an afterthought of philosophical speculation. I hear beforehand the outcry of your opponents, that their suspicions are justified. I anticipate scruples on the part of my own people.

‘Nevertheless, beneath all this, the natural affinities and realities are on the side of such a solution. And if my people had the magnanimity to rely on these and offer you a free pulpit, trusting that adequate theological sympathy would work itself out; and if you, on the strength of this unpledged attitude, felt encouragement to brave reproach, and take a position involving no retraction and only the engagement to go whither the truth of God might lead; it is my sincere persuasion

that a work would open before you here more congenial and of higher character than any which the Free Kirk can have in reserve for you. You are appointed, I must think, to draw upwards those who would otherwise have *less faith* than you: and your faculties will never move with their power unhindered till you have to deal with such an audience. The minor work, of cutting down the existing creeds to the limits of credibility, and reconciling people to a tenable level of religion, may be left to minds of a different cast—and indeed will go on of itself in these days. I cannot help confessing to you these private speculations of my own: for I know they *ought* to be realised; though I can hardly hope that they will. The impossibilities seem to lie thick upon the surface: the rightness of the thing is deep below.

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‘I am sorry to find * * harping upon the old string of “consistency.” Consistency is the most trumpery of virtues; a tight dress in which you cannot move till you make it elastic, or get contact with fresh air till you tear it to rags. But it is the sort of thing which our Unitarians inflate, and hang up for worship as an idol.’

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‘10 Gordon Street, London, W.C.: March 9, 1873.

‘After months of silence on my part, when you have been daily in my thoughts, your welcome letter has at last brought me to the writing point. To a slow correspondent small things serve as an excuse for procrastination: much more, such great affairs as have recently found place in your life—and partly in my own—and

have made it impossible to overtake the crowd of arrears. Of your frightful accident in Glasgow I heard only when the alarm which it awakened was over : and I restrained my anxiety to learn the particulars, lest I should make you write when you ought to be quiet. Your paper in the *Contemporary* I should have liked to discuss with you : but when I found that you were to be hustled for it by a clerical mob, and pulled about by the hand of a Duke, I was sure you would have enough to do, without being troubled with my balance-sheet of scruples and of assents. The question of immediate moment is not the speculative one, whether the positions you maintain are philosophically unimpeachable ; but whether the paper is a genuine, truth-loving, and reverential contribution to the solution of a momentous problem : and it is unworthy of the Duke of Argyll to put forth a polemic article against it, without one word of protest disclaiming all sympathy with the proceedings of the Presbytery. Should I have the opportunity of any conversation with him at the "Metaphysical" on Tuesday, I shall not shrink from intimating my regret on this head, at the risk of incurring a rebuff. And I cannot but hope that, at the meeting of Presbytery, you will think it right to be a little less reticent and forbearing than hitherto. It seems to me quite possible, without transgressing the limits of personal calmness and large charity which you have so admirably kept, to denounce as monstrous the reference of the deepest questions of human thought to the authority of petty tribunals destitute of special competency to decide them. The

pretension implied in such a practice, whether sanctioned by Church law or not, is so intolerable that no man of high conscience and active intellect can submit to it: to do so would be to renounce the essential conditions of any noble or even faithful spiritual life.

‘If this be so, why not dispute, *in limine*, the jurisdiction of the Presbytery, and refuse to go into defence of the theory of the paper—as if an error there would render you properly liable to judgment? There cannot be a right to discuss without a right to go wrong: and to visit error with penal consequences is to proclaim the reign of obscurantism again. . . . I shall be surprised if this week you do not discover that the Free Kirk has no hole, round or square, which you can occupy without splitting the whole framework, or else suffering torture yourself.

‘I have been storing up a few *Hymn-book* questions, to be referred to you: and if you can help by answering them, I shall be greatly obliged. (1) Whence did you obtain the seventy-ninth of your hymns, and where is the MS. of the fifteenth century to be found? (2) What sort of person is Dr. Bonar of Kelso? If I write for permission to use some of his hymns in my new volume, is he likely to raise difficulties? and could I approach him circuitously better than by direct application? (3) Can you advise me in like manner, with regard to the following hymn-writers in Scotland?—Mrs. Jane Cross Simpson, Edinburgh; Rev. Dr. Alexander S. Patterson, Glasgow; Miss Jane Borthwick (known as H. L. L.); Rev. Dr. William Lindsay Alexander,

Edinburgh (Independent) ; of none of these have I the addresses. Hitherto, everyone has been most obliging : and I have had no refusal, even when from Anglican clergymen I have asked permission to change the address of a hymn from *Christ* to the *Father*. But somehow I am more afraid of the Scottish spirit, and should like to present my petition in the best way. I have been applying myself diligently to my compilation, and the text is now all but ready.'

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* 10 Gordon Street, London, W.C. : January 31, 1874.

'I do not in general admire the theological "free lances," who, like George Dawson and Cranbrook, will join no army of assault on the powers of darkness, but roam the field in a desultory skirmish of self-will. The isolation is hurtful to most natures, and tends to produce a moral narrowness and eccentricity in the followers if not in the leader. I know you think me hard on these broad churchmen. Intellectually, I am at one with them ; personally, they win me ; but morally, they perplex me. The riddle was not solved for me by two or three delightful days which, with my daughters Gertrude and Edith, I spent with the Master of Balliol a few weeks ago ; except indeed that I find the key to his interpretation of all religious doctrine in a certain *Hegelian* way of resolving all "abstractions," so as to take them out of their mutual contradictions. The misfortune is that the truth which is thus saved out of old formulas is not the old truth, but something compatible with what the old truth denied ;

and the old formula is a mere husk turned inside out, the continued and solemn preservation of which appears to me a mockery. However, be the secret logic of Jowett's mind what it may, he is one of the wisest and most attractive of men, and his influence on the young men of Balliol is in all respects noble and elevating. He is introducing the practice of personally preaching in chapel once a month; rather to the annoyance, I believe, of other Heads of Houses who do not trouble themselves with any such superfluous duty. It seems amazing that so natural a means of high influence should have fallen into utter neglect. This visit to Oxford made me more aware than ever before of my privations as a Nonconformist.'

' 10 Gordon Street, London, W.C.: February 2, 1874.

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' Mr. Goldwin Smith, who spent a few hours with me the other day, is much struck, on returning to this country, with the enormous spread of absolute and aggressive atheism among the educated English, as well as the general disintegration of religious belief throughout a still wider stratum of society less dogmatically disposed; and he insists strongly on the importance of presenting the "grounds of Natural Religion" in a persuasive and reasonable way to the minds of thoughtful and serious people. The place into which the Bible was forced—and whence it has fallen—being vacated, historical religion cannot be appealed to again, till under it is planted the support of a true spiritual

philosophy and a tenable interpretation of Nature. I wish he would carry out the idea himself. No one could give it better form.'

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'Balnespick House, Kincairg, by Kingussie: July 21, 1876.

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'The question whether Infinity and Personality exclude each other requires that, for comparison, the contents of the two conceptions be laid bare. Till that is done, the alleged difficulty of uniting them cannot even be stated with effect, much less removed. Yet both these tasks are entered on,¹ though the idea of *Personality* is first submitted to analysis. Of the idea of the *Infinite*, it is true, you give two theories on p. 5. But these are theories of its *psychological* origin, by addition of quantities, and by subtraction of limits; and I do not perceive the relevance of these when we want to know, not how we come by the idea, but what it is when we have it. As neither theory approves itself to me as satisfactory, a superfluous reference to them has the effect of embarrassing your thesis with a questionable doctrine, which, even if true, contributes no strength to your position.

'The result of trying to put in the strongest form the difficulty which you attack, before terms for comparison have been cleared, seems to show itself in the next paragraph: where a concession appears to me to be

¹ This refers to an article contributed to *The Contemporary Review* in October 1875, and republished in *Studies in Philosophy and Literature*, 1879.

made from which the argument can never recover ; viz. that Personality is "a phase" in the Divine nature which is deemed "highest" only in virtue of our "poverty of insight," and which is or may be "transcended" by the "impersonal." I own that to me Theism has no meaning, if it be not that in God the *personal is transcendent*, and that what *seems* impersonal (the realm of Nature) is not only subordinate, but illusory in its apparent distinctness from the personal. If you consider this "highest" ranking of the personal as a "figure" of speech, and "poverty of insight," what better title can you find for inverting the order and affirming the personal is "transcended," *i.e. is not* "the highest"? *Other than* personality there may be in the universe: and it is not perhaps possible, in the last resort, to dispense with the conception of some second datum. But the *subjugation* of this to Living Mind is surely the condition of every religious interpretation of the world.

'If I mistake not, you wrote this passage tacitly assuming that "*finite form*" is involved in personality. Withdraw this concession, and nothing remains to show that "the vast," "the infinite," cannot readily be conceived as personal. Had the exact contents of the conception of Personality been first laid out, I hardly think you would have granted so much to your opponent. And so, when you disclaim resort to the entire constitution of our own nature as interpreter of the Divine, is not the disclaimer superfluous? Does anyone ever dream of such interpretation? Is not the

whole question about the *essentials of personality* in all minds? This therefore strikes me as the question in front: and till we reach that part of the Essay, we are withheld, in spite of our interest as we read, from the real business of the discussion.

‘My reason for being willing to part with the second passage is somewhat different. The language of these paragraphs appears to me to underrate the *philosophical* certainty of Theism, and to throw it upon “fugitive” indications for which it will be difficult to secure the confidence of intellectual men. Nor can I acknowledge that the constancy of spiritual light tends to reduce its ideal value and sacredness. Without for a moment denying the varying gleams of Divine illumination, yet I hardly think it wise to give them an important place in a systematic treatment of a question raised by the sceptical logic of severe thinkers. On the whole I felt a certain *precariousness* in these paragraphs.

‘So much for the possible omissions. On other points I find, that wherever my assent hesitates, it is that I am a more unflinching Dualist than you are disposed to be. For instance, from no “ego,” Divine any more than human, can you get rid, so far as I can see, of the antithetic “non-ego.” Of Personality, in which the subject is not differentiated from another, I can form no conception. But then, that from which the thinking subject is marked off need not be an independent or separate being, but may be but a part or function of the subject himself: as a man may say, “I think this, but my hair does not.” So an all-comprehending Mind may

have a personal life, though in conscious thought and act differentiated only from parts of Nature, which are in relation to the organic whole.

‘It is very probable, however, that, in my close and keen interest in the subject and its writer, I may have read with too vigilant an eye, and overstrained the purport of particular phrases; and that in the broader view of the whole, when it is before me, all my criticisms will vanish. Forgive, therefore, my scruples and queries.’

* * * *

† 5 Gordon Street, London, W.C.: October 18, 1877.

‘Too true it is that the verge of limiting darkness which every personal union is always approaching is close upon my sight, and no lingering steps can detain me from it long. . . . We can hardly wish to detain her¹—the mere prisoner of our watchful cares. Meanwhile, our simple and sacred duty is to guide her descending steps over whatever grass and flowers we can find, and soothe the last embrace with the inward calm of trust and love. It is but a brief separation; the emigrant ship will soon be sent for me too; and higher work—as I firmly hope through all the sadnesses of experience—be found for us together in another country, even a heavenly. In the interval of trial and suspense, no sympathy, and no stimulus to persevere in my appointed tasks, can be more precious to me than yours. My earlier congenial friends have dropped off, and left me almost alone; and I need the more the

¹ His wife.

support of comparatively recent friendships, and the help of younger eyes to see the world and human life in the truest and the freshest light.

‘I am thankful, during this trying time, for the necessity of constant lecture-writing. Difficult as it often is, the interest of it is a wholesome engagement to my thoughts; and, by many a sweet breath of truth, it dissipates the cloud of gathering sorrow.’

* * * * *

‘5 Gordon Street, London, W.C. : November 18, 1878.

‘I have a lovers’ quarrel to settle with you : for I have been upbraiding you for running away with me to the “English Lake District,”¹ when I ought to have screwed myself down to my desk, and listened only to the

stern Daughter of the voice of God.

However, she would only have squeezed out of me some stifling metaphysics : while you have poured through me the very breath of the mountains and

the light that never was on sea or land ;

so that in spite of the formal reproaches of my time-list, I shall thank you from my heart for my stolen holiday. Your charming volume will be an inseparable companion of the poet’s works, as well as a literary guide-book to his district. The exactitude and completeness with which you have both tracked his steps and exhibited the relation between the real and the

¹ *The English Lake District, as interpreted in the Poems of Wordsworth.* (D. Douglas, 1878.)

ideal in his local allusions, fill me with admiration. The only thing I regret in regard to the book is that anything has been omitted from the Lecture at the end. I have read no estimate of Wordsworth that reproduces so entirely my own feeling respecting him as your concluding pages.

* * * * *

‘Your approval of my Lecture¹ is very comforting to me. I know well that, in the present temper of men’s minds, its protest is uttered in vain. But behind the clouds the sun remains, and shines; and though the great world may forget it, it is worth while to keep the hope alive, in some poor shivering souls, that ere long it will burst forth again in all its glory.’

* * * * *

¹ The Polchar, Rothiemurchus, Aviemore: August 25, 1879.

‘Though I always shrink from saying the decisive word, I must not visit my own suspensive moods upon your undertaking, but must force myself to a resolve, and brush my hesitations away. I will do my best with Spinoza, and if my life and powers of work are prolonged, the task shall be finished within the two years which you allow me. But you will not forget the uncertainties of old age. I am surprised that you venture to encounter them.

‘I have now got together most of the books which I wanted to examine. But I have not done more than glance at them yet; wishing to clear off, in the first

Ideal Substitutes for God, 1878.

place, another task which pressed for completion. With September I hope to open the Spinoza literature.'

* * * * *

' 5 Gordon Street, London, W.C. : December 17, 1879.

* * * * *

'Nor did I know, till yesterday, that Frederick Pollock's articles on Spinoza are but pilot balloons to an important volume from him on the great Pantheistic philosopher. The two facts together go far to dash my zeal and depress my work, and leave me in a mood anything but favourable to its acceleration. Pollock is master of the subject, and I ought not to mind being eclipsed by his completer book: but my smaller task would have had a better chance of serving a useful end, had it been differently timed.

'At the present stage of my studies I find it impossible to give any pledge about completing the volume within 1880. As I mean to divide the results of my reading and reflection between the volume and my Ethical Lectures, I am obliged to get the entire materials under my eye, for right distribution, before I write a word: and as the literature of the subject has become vast, it is this preliminary study which holds back my hand, and which I find it as yet impossible to measure by weeks or months. If I could get through my reading and planning by the end of May, I think I could write what I have to say during the summer and autumn in Scotland, health permitting; but it is too early for me

to promise more than an honest effort to bring the work within these limits.'

* * * * *

'35 Gordon Square, London, W.C. : December 9, 1880.

* * * * *

'Of the book itself I have not yet written a word. But, with the exception of Pollock's book—now on my table—I have read and digested all the related literature that I wish to consult; and have reduced my own notes—themselves more than the volume in bulk—to a systematic table of contents—on the scale of about fifty pages—the expansion of which will constitute the book. To compress adequately will be my difficulty; but by copious excision of critical matter I hope to conform to the limits prescribed.'

* * * * *

'35 Gordon Square, London, W.C. : March 7, 1881.

'I am very unwilling to add to your editorial troubles; but am obliged to submit to you a question which my Spinoza work renders urgent. In my anxiety to do my task with thoroughness, I have gathered a large mass of materials, and by repeated reflections upon them brought them into a rational order of exposition. But on writing them out into the full text, I find that I have been operating on too large a scale, and cannot possibly bring in what I have to say without exceeding the prescribed limits. The biography alone (which I have just completed) will require a hundred pages; and I do not see how to cut it down without destroying any interest it may have. Then, it is impossible to go

straight into Spinoza's metaphysics, without expounding the logic of his method. There follow his Physics, his Ethics, his Politics, his relations to Theology, all of which, instead of being (as they affect to be) mere deducibles from his metaphysics, involve independent theories, which must be exhibited. No amount of compression can bring all this into a readable volume of the series, even were there no biography. And yet the whole forms so organic a system of thought, that omission becomes mutilation.

'After turning the matter over every way, I have made up my mind to ask whether I may make *two* volumes of Spinoza, instead of one.'

* * * * *

' 35 Gordon Square, London, W.C.: March 24, 1881.

'I have foolishly undertaken an impossible task, which is not rendered more feasible by the inconvenience of modifying its conditions. It cannot be denied that the application of one hard-and-fast measure to the exposition of all philosophies alike, without regard to their differences in originality and range, is recommended by nothing but mechanical and mercantile simplicity. The men who, like Locke, Hume, and Berkeley, are representatives of essentially the same doctrine in different generations, cannot need the large canvas required for unique figures—Spinoza, Kant, Hegel—originators of new moulds of thought and an entire dialect foreign to common use. . . .

* * * * *

'I think it would be a pity to spoil the series by enforcing an inflexible measure upon variable material. . . .'

' 35 Gordon Square, London, W.C. : November 23, 1881.

'I have now my Spinoza MS. in readiness, and only wait for your instructions to forward it. . . . I have exhausted my means of reducing it. So that, if the publishers decline to take it as it stands, I see nothing possible to me, except to withdraw the biography altogether, and bring the volume out as a bare analysis of doctrine. In that case, I should, on my own account, add another volume, containing the Life, with the matter which I have not introduced, viz. the notice of Spinoza's biblical and historical criticism; and the discussion of the supposed *sources* of his philosophy, and of its influence on European thought. But I had much rather not be driven to this, which would impair seriously the interest of the earlier volume, though providing (if I live to carry it out) for a much more complete total at last.'

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' 35 Gordon Square, London, W.C. : December 5, 1881.

* * * * *

'The fact of Pollock's book having so recently appeared makes it especially undesirable to render the range of the volume less comprehensive than his, except in regard to matter extraneous to Spinoza (such as the prior sources and subsequent workings of his philosophy).

* * * * *

‘Finding that the Wolfenbüttel portrait is really a fine one, I have obtained permission to have it *photographed*. . . . Heinemann says that this portrait is the original of the engraving in the Posthumous Works, 1677, which Pollock has reproduced; but that engraving, he says, utterly fails to give the least idea of the beauty of the original. . . .’

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‘35 Gordon Square, London, W.C.: January 30, 1882.

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‘Messrs. Blackwood do not appear to see that the appearance of Pollock’s book altered essentially the conditions of my problem after I had undertaken it. It was impossible to follow so thorough a book with a brief attempt (necessarily futile) to popularise the most abstruse of philosophies. The volume would have been without excuse, unless, by careful treatment, it earned some character of its own.

‘After all, the publishers’ objection resolves itself, in the last resort, into a question of *cost*. Well then; why should not the following proposal relieve their difficulty? Let me bear the outlay for compositors’ work, press-work, and paper, for (say) 70 pages (beyond the 250 which they sanctioned): the amount being deducted from the sum they would otherwise pay me. If they did not overestimate this deduction, and agreed with me beforehand what it should be, I had rather consent to this than cut the book down. The selling price would then be the same as that of the other volumes. This

would be preferable to offering the public a bale of damaged goods after an indefinite delay. . . .'

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'35 Gordon Square, London, W.C. : April 17, 1882.

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'Green's death is a grave sorrow to me. No philosophical thinker of our time seemed to me so thorough and so large, though I could never go with him into his "Hegelian" formulas. I always hoped that, working in the line of "Moral" philosophy, he would emerge from them, especially with the aid of his strong religious feeling. . . .'

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'35 Gordon Square, London, W.C. : April 2, 1885.

* * * * *

'It is inevitable that, on a book¹—which so variously runs counter to the dominant influences of the time—batteries should open, and expose the structure of its doctrine to the severest strain. It is a happy thing, with these theoretic wounds, that, the more one is hit, the more is one healed: for, if an error is knocked out, one is healthier than before.'

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'The Polchar, Rothiemurehus, Aviemore : September 19, 1888.

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'These Church Subjects, I confess, though always attracting me, fill me with despondency. The reading of your good Bishop's Charge, with the Lambeth Conference proposals of which it treats, sinks me into

¹ Referring to his *Types of Ethical Theory*.

despair of all ecclesiastical Christianity: so hopelessly vast is the gulf between the whole instituted scheme of thought involved in it, and the real Truth, Beauty, and Goodness secreted within the Religion of Christ. In the selection which Authority has made from the mixed elements inevitable in every historical product, the *Transient* seem to have been seized upon for consecration and enforcement, and the *Eternal* for suppression and contempt. How any one who has acquaintance with the present stage reached by Biblical and Historical criticism, can bear the puerilities and unrealities of ecclesiastical discussion, I cannot understand. The nearest to the mind of Christ appear to me to be among the people who believe the least of these things, and, were they only swept away, would build in a trice a spiritual Temple not made with hands. Yet I never feel thus iconoclastic, except when I read, or hear, the lucubrations of Church Conferences and Synods. It was well for me that, from my residence here, I was unable to attend the London meeting of Nonconformist Ministers with the Bishops, who were experimenting on the possibility of union. If I had not met the fate of Stephen, it would have been only because words are not stones.*

* Gallants Court, East Farleigh, near Maidstone: April 24, 1889.

‘In all my budget of friendly greetings that followed me hither on Monday last,¹ there were no good wishes more precious to me than yours. They are the kind of

¹ His birthday

treasure which make life still dear to me : and while they last, old age can never lose its brightness. How I wish that you could have realised my dream of having you and yours for our neighbours this summer ! The stimulus of talk on the great topics which are supreme, is all that I need to help and quicken me in the work which still engages me ; work, in which I am apt to flag through self-distrust, and the failure of hope incident to solitary labour. It is so hard for waning faculty to detect its own decline, that I am ever in dread of self-deception, lest I should be going on too long, and growing garrulous when I should be silent. . . .

‘Will it fall in your way, I wonder, to study and criticise the curious type of vague or semi-theism which comes out in Nettleship’s life of Thomas Hill Green, in vol. 3 of the collected works ? It reveals a state of mind which I suspect to be very prevalent, but which can never set into any form of permanent influence. It is either the last faint streak of a dissolving nebula, or the first visible undulation of an ethereal medium that must condense into a central sun.

‘I had intended to send you a copy of our protest against taking Manchester New College to Oxford ; but I fear it has been forgotten. It has been in vain : but though the verdict is against us, I will still forward you a copy, as an evidence that the opposition has not been idle.’

* * * * *

‘35 Gordon Square, London, W.C. : November 27, 1889.

‘I have always regretted that I have twice been disappointed of an expected opportunity of making

personal acquaintance with the Bishop of Ripon ;—once, when he was prevented by a summons to his diocese from fulfilling an intention to call upon me, and talk over the very paper about which you now inquire ; and again at the late Mrs. Carpenter's. The first of these occasions arose from my having sent him the paper to which you refer, and his having written me a letter on the subject, which was to have a conversational P.S.

‘ I have written no article in the *Contemporary* other than what afterwards appeared in pamphlet form, under the title of *The National Church as a Federal Union*. In case you should wish to refer him to this, I have asked Mr. Macdonald, Secretary of the National Church Association, to send you a copy or two. Were it to come from me, it might seem like a reminder of his omission. I know how good and interesting a man he is : and it was my admiration and respect for him that induced me to let him know of our movement. His brother also, whom I slightly know, is one of the best of our London clergy.

‘ I am very glad to hear of the commencement you have made of a short Morning Service at your University.¹ With the conditions which you attach to it,—of its being voluntary, and catholic—it cannot but add a consecrating character to the corporate bond.’

* * * * *

‘ The Polchar, Rothiemurchus, Aviemore : October 10, 1890.

‘ Was ever a poor weak will assailed by such a shower of killing hits as you direct upon mine ? A

¹ The experiment of a daily service, from 8.45 to 9 o'clock, in the College chapel of St. Salvator's.

perfect *mitrailleuse* of persuasive pleas before which, it would seem, everything must go down. To be under your own roof again—to see and hear the “long-desired” Edward Caird, as well as the other honoured guests whom you propose to bring together,—what more enticing group of privileges could be devised to play upon me? And yet I must harden myself against them all, though well aware that such opportunity can never occur again. . . . Moreover, though I am not unmindful of Cicero’s advice—“*resistendum est senectuti*”—I cannot hide from myself that I am but an unworthy intruder now (perhaps always was, had I known myself as well) upon the “colloquies of the gods,” and am in my proper place only at home among my people and at my study-desk.

‘Do not think me ungrateful, but lay my refusal on *Anno Domini*, not on my will. With heartiest thanks and regrets, I remain, always.’

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‘The Polechar, Rothiemurchus, Aviemore : July 13, 1891.

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‘I am reading with much interest a remarkable book on the Philosophy of Religion by the French Professor *Sabatier*, lent me by Dr. Reith, the Free-Kirk Professor and Minister at Glasgow. Sabatier is the Dean of the Faculty of Protestant Theology in the Collège de France. His theology is a peculiar mixture of free-thinking criticism with reverence for the religion of Christ, as the supreme point as yet reached of human thought on Divine things. The position indicates a

considerable change in French Protestantism since the time of Guizot.'

* * * * *

'The Polchar, Rothiemurchus, Aviemore: October 30, 1892.

'I had not the privilege, which the *Times* assigned to me, of joining in the solemn tribute of honour to Tennyson in the Abbey. . . . For me, no lapsed life carries so large a portion of the retreating age away.

'All this summer . . . many a time have I turned a longing eye upon the Larig pass,¹ and wondered whether you were looking down upon our forest roads. The season has not abounded in tempting opportunities for so venturesome a walk; and I am sure that any enterprise about which *you* could feel a doubt is better left untried.

'I half reproach myself for an exceptionally unfruitful summer. The week in Dublin was profoundly interesting to me on all accounts, private and public. In going through it, I felt as if I were completing my appointed lot, and winding off its latest thread at the very point of its first attachment. The visit, however, to Lord Rosse's and the great telescope was a new, and most interesting episode.'

* * * * *

'85 Gordon Square, London, W.C.: November 20, 1893.

'Your benevolent desire to introduce me to Edward Caird has my warmest thanks,—the more cordial because

¹ I was living at Braemar, whence a track leads across to Aviemore.

I am well aware that the privilege and gain must be all upon my side. And though I do not think I am too old to learn, I am conscious of having no longer—even if I ever had—any return to make to a friend that has patience to bear with me, and teach me. On this side alone have I any hesitation in giving an eager response to your suggestion; for I need not say to *you* that no philosophical difference can in the slightest degree chill my admiration for the nobleness and brilliancy of E. C.'s personality. But it strikes me that for some time he will have enough to do in effecting so great a change as the initiation into the duties of his new office, without needless accessories. Though Balliol can never again be to me what it has been in past years, I shall now and then be in Oxford, and shall most thankfully be armed with a better title than my personal name-card to call at the old door on the new Master, if you will let me send in also a few lines from yourself. . . .'

* * * * *

' 35 Gordon Square, London, W.C.: May 12, 1895.

'It would indeed be pleasant could I, on looking back over my long years of opportunity, appropriate even in small measure your far too appreciative estimate. Rather must I side with the critics who tell me that, instead of guiding others, I have always been disturbing them. The mere record of my own personal changes of theological conviction, and the withdrawal by myself of certain early publications from reproduction, seem to make good the charge of instability. The only answer

I can make itself includes an acknowledgment of the impeachment; viz. that what has been relinquished is historical tradition, which partially crumbles away under the skilled search for its foundation; while what has been retained is the living and present relation, witnessed by consciousness itself, between the human spirit and the Divine—and when once known there, re-found and recognised in its perfection—under the unique personality of “Christ, our Head.” The substitution, in short, of Religion at *first-hand*, straight out of the immediate interaction between the soul and God, for Religion at *second-hand*, fetched, by copying out of anonymous traditions of the Eastern Mediterranean eighteen centuries ago, has been the really directing though hardly conscious aim of my responsible years of life. So far as it is one-sided, it will doubtless be corrected, and supplemented by teachers of wider and deeper vision. I thank God if it has been entrusted to me with any function serviceable for the needs of its day.’

* * * * *

‘ 35 Gordon Square, London, W.C.: April 25, 1896.

‘The lapse of four days does not suffice to render my heart’s thanks for your birthday blessing a single degree less warm; nor do I believe that they will receive, through the delay, a less kindly welcome. I have had at times some fear of outliving the patience of my friends. But thus far, even into this tenth decade, I have experienced nothing but their forbearance and supporting affection. I owe much, I believe, to the happy privilege

of having, through nearly eight out of my ten decades, been—as a teacher—continuously in contact with the young, and kept in sympathy with the developing thought and feeling of almost three generations. No man can have less excuse for falling out of touch with the living movements, and problems, of his latest time. It would be nothing less than a heinous sin in me to become superannuated! Yet such assuredly I am, in the eyes of our agnostics and positivists.'

* * * * *

ARTHUR STANLEY

I FIRST met Dean Stanley at Mr. Erskine's house, Linlathen, Forfarshire, in 1869, while I was resident in Dundee. The contrast and the affinity between host and guest in that delightful home were alike remarkable. I have already referred to Mr. Erskine in writing of Carlyle and of Maurice. Perhaps his characteristics came out more remarkably when Stanley was his guest. The Dean had wider sympathy, a broader and more complex range of view; Erskine the deeper and more penetrating vision. Stanley was far more radiant, versatile, many-sided, humorous; but in some respects Erskine was more elevated, calm, and saintly. Their deep appreciation of each other, with differences recognised but not accentuated, struck all who heard them converse together. Mr. Erskine was one of the most gentle and unassuming of men, while valiant in proclaiming what he held to be right. In another volume I have written down a few reminiscences of him,¹ and others have done so to greater purpose.² It was

¹ In *Some Nineteenth Century Scotsmen* (1903), pp. 177-191.

² See *Letters of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen*, by William Hanna (1877); *Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*, by Principal Shairp (1886);

when entertaining his friends in that kindly home in the North that all the finest features of his character were disclosed. Latterly there was a strange sadness in his countenance, the outcome of long pondering on the 'riddle of the painful earth' and the transitoriness of life. He seemed to realise increasingly that while 'in the world'—and with plenty of work to do in it—he was 'not of it'; but only a transient visitant in a place into which he had come for education, rather than enjoyment. He had

to live that each to-morrow
Found him farther than to-day

on the roadway of experience; while his successive homes were but caravansaries at which he halted for the night. The departure of his old friends gave him an increasing sense of solitude. Even so far back as 1855, long before I knew him and when he was sixty-seven years of age, he wrote to Mrs. Russell Gurney: 'My contemporaries are dead, and the friends I see about me do not remember what I remember. We have, however, a great common future, and one common nature.'

These reminiscences of his friend, which have called me away from Dean Stanley, are justifiable by the closeness of the tie which united the two men.

In the autumn of 1870, a copy of Dr. Duncan's *Colloquia Peripatetica* had been sent to him by a common friend, which he acknowledged in the following letter:

Erskine of Linlathen, Selections and Biography, by H. F. Henderson (1899); and *Letters of Amelia Russell Gurney* (1903).

I.

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‘Megginch, Errol: August 20, 1870.

‘My dear Dr. Watson,—On going into Perth yesterday I tried to get *Colloquia Peripatetica*, and found that the last copy had just been sold. I was therefore doubly grateful to you for your welcome gift.

‘I have read it through with the greatest interest, and should much like to see the author when he is next in London.

‘It is certainly a very unusual collection of learning of various sorts and of original remarks; nothing quite like it is known to me. Many of the *dicta*, so tersely put, embody a rare amount of wisdom; while the incisive judgments on philosophical, religious, and theological, as well as literary problems, are valuable alike when we agree and when we differ. The presence of such a man in one of the Scots theological colleges must have been a real education to the students.

‘It is perhaps characteristic that, in spite of the numerous changes, and the wide sympathies of Dr. Duncan, there is—as far as I can see—but one passage expressing the slightest diffidence, or hesitation, as to the positive certainty of the opinions at which he had arrived.

‘There are two observations which he makes about the Church of Scotland, which are to me perfectly true: one, that all Christendom is presbyterian at every ordination; the other, that the divisions in Scotland are not of sects, but of parties.

‘Who was the V.V. that maintained (not altogether unsuccessfully) so long an argument with him?

'I trust we shall meet again at Westminster.

'I am glad that my detention here gave me the opportunity of hearing two excellent sermons from Mr. Barclay.

'Yours sincerely,

'A. P. STANLEY.'

Dean Stanley had an intense and abiding love for St. Andrews, for the city and its surroundings, for the University and its traditions. His historical eye, and his fondness for parallels, led him to speak of it as the Oxford of Scotland. When Lord Rector of the University he delivered two noble addresses to its students, and preached to them both in the college chapel of St. Salvador's and in the parish church. In his first rectorial address he described the ruined cathedral thus :

'This temple, as another Minerva, planted as on another storm-vexed cape of Sunium, this secluded sanctuary of ancient wisdom—with the foam-flakes of the Northern Ocean driving through its streets, with the skeleton of its antique magnificence lifting up its gaunt arms into the sky—still carries on the traditions of its first beginnings. Two voices sound through it. One is of the sea, one of the cathedral—"each a mighty voice"; two inner corresponding voices also, which in any Institution that has endured and deserves to endure, must be heard in unison, the voice of a potent past, and the voice of an invigorating future.'

This, and other descriptions in prose by the Dean, are as fine in their way as is Andrew Lang's *Almæ Matres* in verse. As a conversationalist, Stanley was at his very best whenever he spoke of St. Andrews.

I remember how Frederick W. Faber's sonnet entitled 'Aged Cities' was once read in his hearing, and he immediately said, 'That thirteenth line applies to your own St. Andrews. It "carries age so nobly in its look."' Since his remark connects Oxford with St. Andrews, the sonnet may be quoted in full :

I have known cities with the strong-armed Rhine
 Clasp their mouldered quays in lordly sweep ;
 And lingered where the Main's low waters shine
 Through Styrian Frankfort ; and been fain to weep
 'Mid the green cliffs where pale Mosella laves
 That Roman sepulchre, imperial Treves.
 Ghent boasts her street, and Bruges her moonlit square ;
 And holy Mechlin, Rome of Flanders, stands
 Like a queen-mother, on her spacious lands ;
 And Antwerp shoots her glowing spire in air.
 Yet have I seen no place, by inland brook,
 Hill-top, or plain, or trim arcaded bowers,
 That carries age so nobly in its look
 As Oxford with the sun upon her towers.

The way in which Stanley instinctively seized upon the *genius loci*, and read the past history of the Cathedral and the University while walking in the streets of

The little city old and grey,

was very characteristic. I remember once crossing Westminster Bridge with him coming from Lambeth, and remarking on the fascination of the Thames (it was flood-tide, and the river suggested Mr. Wyllie's picture of the 'Highway of the Nations'). He replied, 'It's nothing to what you have in the North, continually before your eyes.' He did not seem to enjoy any scene unless when it was lit up to him by the historical imagi-

nation, unless some pathos was brought into it from the distant past, its old incidents made to live again in a posthumous manner. Strolling with him on the historic Links, he did not care to watch a game of golf; and he would not have appreciated a remark made to me by Charles Reade, the novelist, when he came to the Club-house and sauntered out to the second hole, 'This is just "linked sweetness long drawn out."' When the Dean walked there, his mind was at once busied with the past, with what had happened between St. Andrews and Guard-bridge, or the assassination on Magus Moor.

Nor can one forget his wonderfully gracious tact as a guide within his own Abbey, the joy it gave him to pioneer not only earnest students of English history, but also ignorant or half-instructed crowds of working-men and women, on holiday-afternoons, through its sacred precincts. It was an education to accompany him when he had a few sympathetic friends, or strangers from other lands, and spoke to them of the life and work of the wondrous dead who now lie in the abbey of which he was the official custodian; but these hours with the working classes were even more instructive. If anyone knew the history of England—as recorded in that monumental shrine—better than he did, certainly no one ever unfolded it in a more luminous, picturesque, or graphic manner; and walks and talks with him in the aisles, the transepts, the choir of the Abbey remain a joyous possession to many.

I remember being with him when he was conducting the members of the Old Testament Revision

Committee one autumn afternoon from Henry VII.'s Chapel up the stairs behind the choir, while the sunset streamed through the western window, and lit up the nave of the Church with a glory peculiarly its own. He was telling us much of the architecture, when a sudden shade of light irradiated it; and, after a brief silence which was instinctive, the Bishop of Ely, Dr. Harold Browne, exclaimed: 'This is the finest sight in England; and Ely Cathedral is the second.'

Dean Stanley's constant intercourse with so many minds, both lay and clerical, of every different type—in Church and State alike—gave him a sympathy with many whose opinions he could not adopt, that was almost unrivalled. Theologically and ecclesiastically he was perhaps the widest-minded man of his age. He was almost equally attracted by the character and personality of the High Anglican and Roman sections of his contemporaries—Newman, Ward, and Faber—and by those of his teacher Arnold, Julius Hare, and John Sterling. He admired and extolled the work done by illustrious Nonconformists, quite as much as that accomplished by the divines of the Church by law established. When he came to Scotland it used often to be remarked that he knew more about its ecclesiastical divisions, and minor sects, than any of the divines he met. But his sympathies ranged out far beyond the Church, of which he was so illustrious a representative. They became more and more cosmopolitan as time went on. They were with the archaic and the modern, with the classical, the historical, the scientific and artistic, with

the political, social, and national. His desire was to make the Abbey more and more distinguished as the resting-place of the ashes of the great, in every sphere of noble action and fruitful achievement; that it should be the material counterpart of 'the choir invisible' of all who had lived for the true, the beautiful, and the good.

When the memorial statue of Wordsworth was erected in the Baptistry, he was greatly interested in the inscription which should be placed beneath it. The sculpture was the work of Frederick Thrupp. On the western side of the same enclosure there are busts of Keble and Dr. Arnold, (which are fairly good), of Maurice Kingsley and Matthew Arnold, (which are not good), and there are windows put in by Mrs. Child of Boston, in memory of George Herbert and William Cowper; but the Wordsworth statue is by far the most interesting memorial in that historic spot. Thinking of the best inscription to be carved beneath it, Stanley consulted, amongst others, his friend Principal Shairp. Without a moment's hesitation Shairp replied, 'Let it be the poet's own lines,

Blessings be with them and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares,
The poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!'

And these lines are inscribed on the pedestal.

The Dean's *Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church* is the book by which, perhaps, he will be longest known. In connection with it, a small thing may be mentioned, because of the interest it gave to some guests

at Megginch in the autumn of 1877. In the forty-fifth lecture—which is on Malachi, and the close of the Roman period—after tracing the relations of the Jewish Church to the Gentile World, and glancing at Zoroaster Confucius and Buddha, noting the contact of the first of them and the aloofness of the other two from the Hebrew World, the lecturer refers to the coming blank of three centuries of which in Palestine we know almost nothing. Yet not the less the hour had come when an influence more penetrating was about to burst upon the development of the Jewish Church, and almost contemporary with the last of the Hebrew seers arose the earliest prophets of the European world. They had been looking to the East, and thence receiving light; but it had ceased to shine. Was there any hope of its now appearing in the West? The Dean quotes the lines of Clough,

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

And the next lecture is devoted to Socrates.

These lectures on the Jewish Church are a triumphant vindication of the historical method of inquiry in the domain of Religion, and they have not yet done perhaps all the service they are destined to do in the re-formation of opinion, advancing with such rapid strides. Stanley repeatedly and very earnestly asserted the impossibility of a literal subscription to any articles of belief. We often talked on this subject. Unless every mind was identical with every other mind in faculty, in

the balance of its powers and methods of apprehension, similarity in opinion was no more possible than identity in feeling; and if opinion and feeling necessarily vary in each man, woman, and child, how can they put the same interpretation on the Creeds, or on those Scriptures from which the former are derived? If identity of opinion were sought, the Church would be narrowed down to the individual. He enjoyed the story of the rigidly orthodox Highland woman, to whom her minister said, 'You'll be thinking that there's naeboddy soond, and safe, but you and your gude man,' and who at once replied, 'Ah, but I'm na sae sure o' Geordie.' His supreme desire was that the Church should be an inclusive—not an exclusive—society; that it should embrace and tolerate within it every genuine type of religious thought, with all the varied phases of character which were the product of devout aspiration.

Many admirable things have been written or told of the Dean's humour, and his appreciation of the humorous side of life. Two which I heard from him I may reproduce. Coming once from Methven to Megginch alone, about the 12th of August, and having to pass through the station of Perth—at that time of year always crowded—many were lamenting the loss of luggage. An old widowed Scots woman in particular was remonstrating, gesticulating, and abusing the officials. The Dean tried to console her with the hope that she would recover her lost property. 'Ey Sir, meenister,' she said (seeing he was a clergyman), 'I can stand ony pairtins, but pairtin wi' ma baggage.'

On another occasion he was journeying in the same neighbourhood, when two fellow-passengers in his carriage, ignorant of who he was, began to abuse the heretical and latitudinarian Dean, unstinting in their denunciations. When he reached his station, and was about to walk to a carriage in waiting, he suddenly remembered that he had left his umbrella in the train and returned for it, when the passenger who had used so many bad words about him had taken it up, and found the name (the Dean of Westminster) on the handle. He apologized profoundly, and said that he did not know who it was who was travelling with him. 'Never mind,' said the Dean. 'You have given me a good deal to think about, and I am much obliged to you.'

Another of the minor but not trivial things worth recording is that Dean Stanley was never known to lose his temper with either friend or foe, with disputant or antagonist, or anyone whose casual acquaintance he made. The genial radiance of that sunny temperament of his, the brightness of his clear-souled sympathetic vision, made loss of temper as impossible to him as the existence of envy or vanity. He was always, and to all alike, a 'shining visitant.'

When in Scotland the Dean gave proof of his catholicity by preaching in many of the Presbyterian parish churches, in Greyfriars, Edinburgh, Roseneath, Errol, and Dundee, as well as St. Andrews. In July 1874 I received a letter from him in reply to one returning a misdirected letter which had reached me by mistake.

'Deanery, Westminster.

'I am very glad that the mistaken address of my letter took it to you, as it has elicited so interesting a letter. I have followed your career with unabated attention and pleasure; and, much as I could have wished for ourselves that you had cast your lot on this side the Tweed, I fully appreciate, and entirely commend, your motives in remaining where you are, and shall certainly hope to accept your kind invitation to preach in your Church.'

Later on, March 5, 1875, he wrote as follows:—

'Owing to the collision between * * and the Bishop of London, which you may have seen noticed in the newspapers, they agreed to make an amicable reference of a joint case for a legal decision on the lawfulness of Church of England clergy preaching in Nonconformist chapels. In order to get the whole question put on its widest basis, the point was also submitted as to our preaching in the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland. I have hardly a doubt that, as regards the latter case, the legal opinion will be favourable: and also, if the opinion is not yet pronounced I should act as heretofore. But, *ex abundanti cautela*, I think it right to say that, should the opinion be adverse, I will not preach.'

Knowing that he was to be at St. Andrews delivering an address as Lord Rector, I asked him in January 1875 to come to Dundee, and speak to our newly formed University Club in that city. He gladly acquiesced; and, as the time approached, fixed the 2nd of April for

his visit. He afterwards wrote asking for details as to his audience, and said, 'I think of an old lecture with a new face, under the title of "The Relations of Theology, Science, and Literature."'

As the lecture which he gave on this subject is full of interest, dexterously put, and is not accessible in print, it will be reproduced at the close of this chapter; not unfortunately from the MS., but from the newspaper report of the hour. He came across from St. Andrews, and addressed a large audience which filled the Albert Hall; spent the night and part of the next day with friends, and saw what was of interest to him. Mr. Erskine of Linlathen, and others, came in to meet him. His host and hostess remember two things: the gracious manner in which he spoke to little children, and the way in which he left a benediction—both literal and figurative—behind him. In the morning of the day he left, the provost of the city called to try to induce him to visit a jute factory! an experience which would have been most distasteful, and which he politely declined. Lady Augusta was not with him. She was too ill to leave London, and when he revisited Dundee the following year, while on a brief journey in Scotland, she had died; and he was accompanied by his friend Canon Pearson.

When he was writing on Southey, he wrote to me about the 'Rock of Names' on the shore of Thirlmere; and, as the note indicates his love of accuracy, it may be quoted. There had been other initials foolishly carved by egotistical trippers on the historic stone,

beside those of the Wordsworth and Coleridge family—whose meeting-place it used to be—and its very authenticity came to be doubted. He wrote from the Deanery, November 20, 1877, as follows:

‘I have been in communication with the Bishop of Manchester about the Stone of Names. This fragment contains what, if true, would be fatal to its pretensions. Let us not be like the Antiquary with A. D. L. L.; but I think the informant must be in error. I have not your book at hand, but I remember S. T. C., and also S. H., D. W., M. W., which are surely beyond the reach either of accident or fraud. Tell me what you know about the matter, and I will press the question. . . .’

The site of the Rock of Names, described in *The Waggoner* of Wordsworth, is now sunk beneath the Manchester Corporation reservoir, and the picturesqueness of old Thirlmere is a thing of the past; but before its submergence, a few fragments of the ‘upright mural block of stone,’ with its initial letters, were removed, and carried up the flank of Helvellyn, where they are now built into a small cairn above the present roadway.

On March 31, 1879, Stanley visited Keswick, and gave a lecture on Southey to the members of the Cumberland Association for the Advancement of Literature and Science. It was printed in the *Transactions* of that Society, but nowhere else; and, as it is not alluded to in the Dean’s memoir, some extracts from it may be given here. He spoke of the poems of Southey as ‘his earliest love.’ ‘Not even the novels of Sir Walter Scott had, for me, a keener attraction. The prospect of visit-

ing the scenes of any of these poems filled me with enthusiasm; and although in later years that enthusiasm may have cooled down, yet it was only three years ago that it led me indirectly into making a visit to the otherwise somewhat uninviting kingdom of Portugal, that I might see some of the spots hallowed in my memory by the closing scenes of *Roderick*. Even now I sometimes feel as if I could not die happy until I had explored the locality of the crisis of that poem, "Covadonga, in the Asturias." . . . He admitted that Southey was 'one of those poets who have now fallen almost into oblivion in the great outside world. Here and there you meet with individuals, like myself, who still cherish the flame he once enkindled. . . . But they are exceptions, and it is therefore instructive from time to time to recall the thoughts of this younger generation to the household gods of their fathers, and to poems which have retained a more living popularity, where may be seen traces of Southey's influence. For example, I doubt whether any single poet has so deeply coloured the phraseology of Keble's *Christian Year* as Southey did. . . .'

'Southey is the genius of Keswick, almost as exclusively as Wordsworth is of Grasmere and Rydal, or as Shakespeare is of Stratford-on-Avon. His grave, his monument, his house still speak of him. . . . The first time that I visited the Lakes was when I was staying in Grasmere with Dr. Arnold; and rode, or walked over, from it to Keswick. It was a great disappointment to me, although highly characteristic of the man, that

Dr. Arnold was too shy to give me a letter of introduction to the poet whom of all others in England I should most have wished to see. I walked, if I remember, round the outside of Greta Hall; but that was the nearest approach I ever made to him in bodily presence. . . . From the abundant stores that his letters provide, he remains a shining example of a man whose pleasure was found in the simplest, kindest, social intercourse, and in the most indefatigable intellectual activity. Such a workman is an example to us all, a workman who feels pleasure in his work, and his enjoyment in ministering to the wants of others. He said somewhere, and herein I quite agree with him, that one of the greatest of earthly pleasures is the correction of proof-sheet. An excellent Quaker, who crossed the Atlantic with me last autumn, told me that Southey had said to him (he was then sixty-five), "My motto through life has been 'in labore requies.'" He pointed as he spoke to the sixth volume of the *Acta Sanctorum*, through which he was steadily plodding, and added, "My only sorrow will be when I have reached the end." . . .

'*Thalaba* and *Kehama* have never lost their hold on those who were once swayed by them. . . . He has himself given the account of their origin.¹ Unconsciously, perhaps, he was here treading on the threshold of that immense world of Religious Philosophy, which the latter part of the nineteenth century has, for the first time in the world's history, appropriated to itself—the region of Comparative Theology, or Comparative

¹ See his *Life and Correspondence*, vol. iii. p. 351.

Religion—that which in our day has been so powerfully set forth by Professor Max Müller. It is a region of the greatest interest to scholars; but it is also a region full of the most precious and useful instruction to pastors and their flocks in the humblest walks of life, because it opens to us the consoling belief—taught indeed by the Apostles, but in the later ages of Christianity almost entirely eclipsed—that the knowledge and grace of God are not confined to any single church, or any single race, but may be found wherever the heart sincerely turns towards whatever there is of the best and highest in its own experience. . . . In *Thalaba* he took the one great Mahomedan virtue of resignation, and worked it out to the full. In doing so, he entered so completely into the genius of the Arabian world that, as we read the pages of *Thalaba*, we seem to be transported altogether beyond the range of European thought or European scenery. . . .

‘ This day, for the first time in my life, I have penetrated into Greta Hall, and into Southey’s library. It was a great satisfaction to think that in a chamber so long consecrated, and the scene of such indefatigable work, there should still go on the work of useful and faithful instruction. Not now are the walls clad with the books that used to clothe them as with an everlasting drapery, but I call to mind one of the most beautiful poems—one of the most affecting, because I feel how every word comes from the poet’s heart. He speaks about his hours in that library, about his hours amongst the books of the great and good, from whom he learned

so much, and from whom he also endeavoured to teach others.

My days among the dead are passed ;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old :
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.'

We had once an interesting talk at the Deanery about the high Alps. I had been climbing a little in 1873, and someone had told him of it. He said he wished to know what was the fascination ; because he never climbed, and could not climb. He wanted to know not so much about the peaks and passes or the physical exhilaration and delight (which was easy to understand,) but about the after-effect of it all on the mind and brain. He quite realised the pleasure of peril safely over-past, but what did climbing leave behind it ? I spoke of the disclosures of Nature's forces and glories ; but the chief allurement was the way in which all the powers of muscle, nerve, and brain were eduved, the discipline of endeavour, the education in tact, resourcefulness, patience, elasticity of spirit, good temper, readiness to yield and obey, as well as to dare. 'I suppose,' he said, 'that in mountaineering you prove all things, and hold fast only that which is good.' 'Yes, and the physical discipline reacts on the mental, and braces you for other efforts, while the storehouses of memory are grandly filled.' He said it was a great delight to get sympathetically into the heart of a thing he could not do himself ; but *his* great delight had been in travel, both in foreign

lands and in our own. It had done as much for him as social life, or the reading of books; but 'how well they intermingle,' he said.

Some members of the Athenæum Club associate a particular room with him. He was, especially in later years, so overwhelmed by visitors at the Deanery—where he got scant time to write his sermons—that he was accustomed to retire for that purpose to the Athenæum; and there is a special table at which he used to write standing (as was also his practice at home). It is one of the numerous associations of that gathering-place of interesting men.

When I went to Geneva in the autumn of 1877, to spend some two months in the city, Dean Stanley gave me introductions to many of his own and Lady Augusta's friends amongst the Genevese; the De Candolles, Navilles, Favres, Père Hyacinthe, &c. He said that both he and his wife used to think that Geneva circle the most cultivated and delightful in Europe. It is not for me to characterise it here, but only to say that the inquiries of one and all of them for their friend at Westminster Abbey were perfervid, and their reminiscences of her who had departed were most radiant and blissful.

The rare refinement of Stanley's face was a sure and certain index to the refinement of the man. His intellectual brilliance and rapidity, his conversational charm, appealed to everyone: but his very countenance showed him to be 'a child of light.' It is easier far to delineate him as a religious historian, an essayist with

a style that was invariably lit from within, than it is to describe his character. The picturesqueness of his conversation can be recorded, but the underlying spring of his goodness cannot be chronicled. All that his friends can say is this: He 'walked in the light,' and he knew the 'fellowship of love below.'

His geniality came out conspicuously in meeting and conversing with the University students of St. Andrews, when he was their Lord Rector. On such occasions everyone ought to be in the best of humours. Unfortunately, this has not always been the case, in some of our Universities; and perhaps the rarest of successes—rarer and greater than any achievement in oratory or argument—is the power to compel regard, and respectful listening, even when counter-demonstrations on the part of the supporters of a rival candidate for the office are made. 'Rivals' had no chance with this most genial of Lord Rectors, as they had no *locus standi* when the election was over.

Other occasions, on which the tact and *bonhomie* of the Dean and Lady Augusta were conspicuous, were at the small receptions in the Deanery after some distinguished person had discoursed in the nave of the Abbey, or its chapter-house. When the Master of Balliol or Principal Tulloch preached in the former, or Max Müller spoke in the latter, old friends would gather in the Deanery for pleasant talk, and the impression left behind was always radiant and benign.

It is also worth recording, as I know not whether it has been done or not, that Henry Crabb Robinson wrote

thus from Rydal on January 30, 1842: 'I learned from Mrs. Arnold that when Mr. Stanley, the biographer of Dr. Arnold, took orders in the Church, he delivered into the hands of his bishop (Bishop Bagot of Oxford) a protest, declaring his disbelief in the Athanasian Creed, to which no objection was taken.'

This is interesting in connection with a controversy in which the Dean was involved in later years, when in 1872 the Archbishop of Canterbury introduced a rubric in Convocation which was intended to explain away the damnatory clauses of the creed without changing them. The Dean opposed the proposal in ever-memorable words: 'Whoever was the author' [of this creed], 'he knew what he meant. He meant, as the Emperor Charlemagne meant, that anyone who would not accept these words was everlastingly lost, and should be destroyed by sword and fire from the face of Christendom. I admire the Emperor Charlemagne, but I cannot admire those who come with these modern explanations to draw out the teeth of this old lion, who sits there in his majesty, and defies any explanation to take out his fierce and savage fangs.'

While the desire and rooted purpose of his life was to widen sympathy and to promote peace, he was brought into much controversy. His championship of *Essays and Reviews*—both in Convocation, and in the *Edinburgh Review*—was emphatic; but his defence of Bishop Colenso was still more noteworthy. The Bishop of Natal had come to England to try to obtain redress for wrong done to a Zulu chief; and, as also a lover of

peace, had declined the Dean's offer to him to preach in the Abbey. At a meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Stanley said boldly: 'The Bishop of Natal is the one colonial bishop who has translated the Bible into the language of the natives of his diocese. He is the one colonial bishop who, when he believed a native to be wronged, left his diocese, journeyed to London, and never rested till he had procured the reversal of that wrong. He is the one colonial bishop who, as soon as he had done this, returned immediately to his diocese and his work. For these acts he has never received any praise, any encouragement, from this the oldest of our Missionary Societies. For these deeds he will be remembered when you who censure him are dead, buried, and forgotten.'

We were speaking one day of libraries, and their imperishable lessons to us; of the mania of the 'collectors,' who never read the books they bring together; of the foolish prices given for 'first editions' of books written by great men; their second and third editions being much less valuable in the market, however much improved (as a rule) in substance and contents; of the joy of contemplating a long row of volumes by men who misunderstood each other when alive, who were perhaps ready to burn the books, if not the authors whom they tried to tear to pieces by their pens, now all lying silently together, ready for dispassionate study, criticism, cross-examination, and the more fair-minded judgment of posterity. Stanley said it sometimes affected him almost to tears (if he was in a sympathetic

mood), but usually with profound thanksgiving, and a conviction that the verdict of time was almost invariably just. He added that there was no place in the world where one who was open to such teaching could learn more of his own surpassing ignorance, than in a great library; and he told me that he went into a great storehouse of mediæval books in Granada, and another at the Troitsan monastery near Moscow, and found that he did not previously know one single volume on the shelves! Was it not humiliating? And yet the many lessons such an experience taught were most salutary.

The Dean had no great appreciation of landscape beauty. It was the historic associations that surrounded the hallowed places, the incidents once transacted there, that appealed to him almost exclusively. And in connection with his interest in famous places because of famous men, and the world of emotion awakened by his first visit to them, it is easy to understand his indifference to a second visit, unless it was to correct some erroneous impression left by the first. He could not experience over again his earlier feelings of delight; and the later inspection was to satisfy historical curiosity, not for the reawakening of enthusiasm when the dead bones of history came to life again. It is not true to say (as some one has done) 'that he never cared to see the same place twice': but it is quite true that 'although it was a rainy day when he first saw the plain of Marathon, he preferred to let that visit be his last.'

Dr. Martineau wrote to me, on the 10th of August, 1881: . . . 'The death of Dean Stanley still weighs

heavily on my heart. His departure closes a memorable chapter in the history of English Religion, and in the social life of London; for the system of relations that centred in him can never be reproduced. A note was found upon his desk addressed to me, the last that he wrote, dated July 17, the day before his death. It referred to Tulloch, about whom he had again written to Dr. Ramsay.'

Later on Martineau wrote to me:

. . . 'With him the greatest *personal* power I have ever known has passed from us. The loss to London in particular is something quite unique. . . .'

No finer tribute to Arthur Stanley has been borne than that of his life-long friend, and fellow-labourer for the true and the good, Matthew Arnold, two stanzas of whose elegy I may quote in conclusion—

What! for a term so scant
Our shining visitant
Cheer'd us, and now is pass'd into the night?
Could'st thou no better keep, O Abbey old,
The boon thy dedication-sign foretold,
The presence of that gracious inmate, light?
A child of light appear'd;
Hither he came, late-born and long-desired,
And to men's hearts this ancient place endear'd
What, is the happy glow so soon expired?

* * * * *

Yet in this latter time
The promise of the prime
Seem'd to come true at last, O Abbey old!
It seem'd a child of light did bring the dower
Foreshown thee in thy consecration-hour
And in thy courts his shining freight unroll'd;

Bright wits and instinct sure,
And goodness warm, and truth without alloy,
And temper sweet, and love of all things pure,
And joy in light, and power to spread the joy.

DEAN STANLEY IN DUNDEE : APRIL 2, 1875.

He said :

‘The subject on which I propose to speak is “The Mutual Relations of Religion, Science, and Literature.” In dealing with this somewhat abstruse subject I have thought it best, partly for my own convenience, partly for your pleasure, to place it before you in a concrete form. Great ideas and great doctrines, and the mutual relation of these doctrines, are best understood, or at any rate best appreciated, when they appear before us in flesh and blood. I propose, therefore, to select as examples of Theology, Science, and Literature, three great men, who were a few years ago accidentally brought into mutual relationship by the fact that their three anniversaries were celebrated in their three respective countries almost at the same time, viz. Calvin, Galileo, and Shakespeare. There are two advantages in this selection, besides the coincidence of their death and birth. First, that, more perhaps than any other three names I could take, they have such universal fame that they need no explanation and no introduction ; secondly, that they are so far removed from us by time and country that we can treat of them without involving ourselves in

the personal and party feelings which the names of three contemporaries, or three Scotsmen, however eminent, could hardly fail to excite.

‘It is my intention to speak of these great men as the representatives of Theology, Science, and Literature, chiefly with the view of showing the relation in which all the three stand to the religious and moral advancement of mankind, which is the one point that unites together these three great branches of thought.

‘I speak first of Calvin, the French and Swiss reformer. The death of Calvin occurred on May 27, 1564. As the sun set in the evening over the hills above Geneva, his friends observed that the great light of their city set also. It was no wonder. I said at the opening of this lecture that I selected him as a fitting exemplification of theology, but to those who lived in his own time he was more than this. Whilst he lived, and for a hundred years after his death, there was no theologian in Protestant Europe whose name could be compared with his, for weight and authority. It was an argument in itself. Far more than Luther, or Melancthon, or Zwinglius, he was the theologian of the Reformation. Geneva is the only city in Europe besides Rome that has a religious ecclesiastical sound in its very name. In the library of the aged French historian M. Guizot there were two great pictures side by side to which he used to point as representing the two ecclesiastical centres of Europe. One was Rome, the other was Geneva.

‘Whatever theology sprang up in Great Britain at that time came straight from Calvin. The English Puritans and Nonconformists, the Presbyterians of Scotland, whether Established or Free or United, all owe their existence more or less to Calvin. And not only so, there was no single person then out of our own country, hardly within our own country, who had so great an influence on the teaching of the Church of England, when it first began its new career. “It is safer,” said Richard Hooker—himself in some respects a far greater writer than Calvin—“to attack all the saints in heaven than to say a word against John Calvin.”

‘The first reflection which this statement of Calvin’s fame suggests is this—that the fame is no longer what it was. By the time that the tercentenary of Calvin came to be celebrated, ten years ago, it was evident that a change had passed over the face both of the world and of the Church. The work of Erasmus, the great scholar of his time, is still living in the impulse he gave to the study of the Bible, and in his large and liberal ideas of Christianity. Luther’s name is still powerful, as that of a man of commanding genius, and as the mainspring of the Reformation. But neither in France, of which Calvin was a most characteristic son as regards logical directness and clearness of expression, nor in Geneva, of which he was the father, nor even in Scotland, of which through Knox he may be said to have been the spiritual grandfather—and in which the form of his theology has longest endured—not even in any of these countries, and still less in Europe generally, has the

magic of the great name of Calvin maintained what was in his lifetime its undisputed pre-eminence. What is the reason of this change of feeling? It is that Calvin threw his whole strength into one particular phase of Christian belief and of Christian practice. He saw straight before him, but only in one direction. He was the most splendid of partisans, but still a partisan.

‘He was the founder of a particular school of belief. He was not the promoter of truth, and goodness, for their own sake. This is the first lesson which we draw from Calvin’s appearance—and which will be strengthened as we proceed—the temporary passing nature of mere party polemics. Think of any mere political or ecclesiastical leader at the present moment. He cannot fill your thoughts more than Calvin filled the minds of English, Scottish, French, and Swiss Protestants in the sixteenth century. But he has now stepped into the background. Even in theology—the greatest of all subjects of human thought—the day of favourity party leaders will not last for ever. The controversies which now seem so full of importance will, three hundred years hence, be laid fast to sleep.

‘But it would be doing great injustice to Calvin and to ourselves, and it would be to miss one main part of the lesson which his appearance teaches us, if we did not acknowledge the lasting benefits we owe to him. I am not now speaking of the great ability, and the candour and good sense, of his Commentaries; because these have been superseded by greater works of the same kind, and were not peculiar to himself even at that time.

I confine myself to two points in which he stands pre-eminent.

‘The first which I shall notice is the truth contained in his doctrines. Nothing is more useful for men who are educating themselves, nothing more profitable for theological study, than to endeavour to find out what is the truth that lies at the bottom of doctrines or opinions with which, as commonly expressed, we feel ourselves constrained to disagree. Such is the case with the doctrine of Predestination, which is at the root of all that is peculiar to what we call Calvinism. There has been so much exaggeration, so much folly talked concerning it, that we are sometimes inclined to think of it as a thing altogether passed by. But the truth itself which it was intended to convey is one which will never be lost to the world. It is this; that there is an overruling Providence which guides our steps in life, without our perceiving it; that there is a Power greater than ourselves, without which we cannot move or act; that this Providence leads us through mysterious paths to our very highest good; that whatever is good or excellent, in ourselves or others, comes from this higher Power.

‘This is the true doctrine of Predestination — a doctrine which may become mere fatalism, but which in itself is perfectly certain, and most important. We must add other doctrines to it, to make it wholesome and useful, but this doctrine must be added to them; and the merit of Calvin is, that though he may have pushed it to excess, yet he helped to preserve it in the world, and hand it on to us. We may remember that a

great writer of our own time—the greatest of living Scottish authors, but as unlike Calvin as it is possible to conceive—has recorded solemnly that this doctrine of Predestination, so understood, is in his judgment unquestionably and indispensably necessary. Thomas Carlyle, in his *History of Frederick the Great*, said this meant—and at the bottom of his heart Calvin also meant—to tell us that we are all, and each of us, instruments in the hands of the Supreme Good for working out his will—links in the chain of a long-enduring Providence—with a work before us to do, for the sake of doing which each one of us was sent into the world.

‘There is a second element in Calvin’s teaching which ought to be considered in connection with any form of theology that claims to be enduring—viz. what is its moral and practical result? I shall not dwell on its results in the moral life of England, and still less of Scotland, partly for the reason I have already hinted, that I desire on this occasion to avoid approaching too closely to local questions; partly because this was treated at length some years ago in an address delivered in this neighbourhood by a distinguished historian, Mr. Froude. But the point to which I would call attention—because it is not so much thought of, and because it is in itself so clear an evidence of what a great theologian can do—is this, that Calvin founded in the city and State of Geneva a habitation of morality and of liberty combined, which has lasted there even to our own day. Here again, no doubt, there was excess and exaggeration; he was too austere, too rigid, too uncompromising; but

nevertheless he did contrive, by the sole force of his example and discipline, to create in that little town a society so pure, and so respectable, that all the nations of Europe sent their sons there to be educated. Nothing could be a higher tribute to him and to Geneva than the fact that Lord Chesterfield chose Geneva for his son in preference to Paris, or Florence, or any of the fashionable cities of Europe, because there more than anywhere else a young man was likely to be brought up without falling in with the common temptations of youth.

‘And, with this good morality, there was also instilled by Calvin into the people of Geneva an independence, a freedom of thought, which through all manner of changes has continued, and has rendered Geneva a refuge for intelligent and enlightened men from every country, who could find no other home so congenial or so safe. Through Calvin’s influence many a young man of the first families of Europe has been saved in a most critical period of his life ; many a parent has thus been spared a broken heart. Through Calvin’s influence, also, many a noble spirit has there breathed freely and independently, who would not have had a place elsewhere on the Continent open to run for shelter. It is true he burned Servetus. It is the one blot which is recorded against the Reformers by many who forget the acts of the same kind, far more numerous, which tarnish the fame of the Roman Church in England, Spain, France, and Italy.

‘But it is the glory of Calvin that, in spite of this miserable act, the general spirit which he infused into

Geneva made it—what it has been for the last two hundred years, and is still—the most intelligent city in Europe, the shelter of the oppressed, the school of just and free thought. And, although Calvin could hardly recognise his own city, were he to come back; this is only an instance of the gracious truth that any good influence which we shed abroad may have its fruits in ways we cannot conceive beforehand, and which perhaps did we know, we in our weakness would deprecate.

‘ This leads me to pass to those other two great men whose anniversaries were celebrated in Italy and England, at the same time that Calvin’s death was celebrated at Geneva. When on May 27, 1564, Calvin passed from the midst of his sorrowing followers, he would have been surprised at hearing that already there were born—one sixty, one thirty days before—two men whose fame would outshine his as far as the skies are above the earth, and as the whole earth is wider than any single sect or party. Yet so it was. Calvin, I say, would have been startled to hear that the time would come when a professor of Mathematics, or a writer of Plays, should be thought more of than he, the theologian of half Christendom. Yet even he, if he were true to his own doctrines, would have acknowledged, or ought to have acknowledged, in words which no doubt he often quoted, that every good and perfect gift, everything in proportion as it is good or perfect, comes down direct from the Father of Lights. They all come from the Father of those innumerable lights which we see in the starry heaven, and of the innumerable lights which enlighten

the minds of men; which themselves indeed both in heaven and earth are subject to change, eclipse, and shadow, but are not the less the good gifts of him "with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

'In the most literal sense, the two great men of whom I am now to speak are exact illustrations of this very truth. It has been said by one of the greatest of modern philosophers, Immanuel Kant, "There are two things of which the more we think of them the more they fill the soul with awe and wonder; the starry heaven above, the moral law within." These are themselves two of the greatest gifts that the Father of Lights has given us. They are ever with us; the lights in the heaven above, the lights in the human soul. But, like many other gifts, they have to be studied, in order to be known, appreciated, enjoyed. They are gifts which need interpreters to explain their meaning, to draw forth their beauties, and fix our attention upon them.

'Two such interpreters, each perfect for this special purpose, were by a singular coincidence born into the world in that same year of 1564 in which Calvin died; one, an interpreter for all future time of the stars of heaven, Galileo, the father of astronomy, on February 18, at Pisa; the other, the interpreter for all future ages of human nature, our own Shakespeare, on April 23, at Stratford-on-Avon. Of these two, I will first speak of Galileo. In his case as in Calvin's I leave on one side the direct benefits of his scientific discoveries. They belong either to learned men, or else to the particular professions who have profited by them. I confine

myself, as before, to those matters which are common to all educated men—in other words, the moral and religious benefits of Galileo's appearance, which bring Theology into relation with Science, and Science into relation with Theology.

‘Put yourselves back to that time, and ask what has been the advantage to religious progress that would, humanly speaking, not have been gained if Galileo had not lived? To him, as you know, it is owing that we have our present knowledge of the stars, of the relations of this earth to the solar system, of the sizes, the distances, the motions of those innumerable heavenly bodies. Now, it is certain that by revealing to us the vast infinity of space he revealed to us, in a sense in which it was never understood before, the infinity of the Universe, and, therefore, the infinity of God. The immeasurable nature of God is a doctrine which had, in a certain sense, been known before, but it received an enlargement, an extension far beyond conception, when for the first time mankind was made to feel that the stars were not mere spangles in the sky, but worlds like our own, that the distance between them was to be counted not by thousands, but by millions and millions of miles. The order, the intelligence, the supreme will which guides all these vast systems then became known to man, as they had never been known to him before. But this scientific knowledge, unlike the special peculiarities of Calvin's theological system, has never passed away, but has gone on increasing and fructifying in every succeeding age. In the same year that Galileo died

Newton was born, and by him the work of scientific truth was handed on with increasing lustre to our own time. That is the first point gained by Religion from Galileo.

‘The second is the triumph of faith over sight, of reason over prejudice. Think what a difficulty there must have been in receiving the truths which Galileo announced. All the world down to that time had believed that the earth stood still, that the sun moved round the earth, that the sun rose up in the heavens and set behind the earth. All the evidence of our senses, all the testimony of human language, all the authority of immemorial tradition, all the belief of every Church, the letter of the Bible itself, was dead against the new discovery. On the other side there was but the opinion of one gifted man appealing to the results of his researches. But the opinion of that one gifted man, resting on the certain facts which he had seen, and which no one else had seen, has prevailed against the habits and prejudices and traditions of the whole world. What a lesson of humility does this teach us! of humility and deference to the authority of the really just and true! What a warning to us to set aside as good for nothing the Authority which is only external! What an example of the power of truth over obstacles which might have seemed quite insurmountable! What an encouragement to those who, whether few or many, are engaged in the pursuit of truth in any department of knowledge, human or divine!

‘And yet one more benefit Galileo has conferred upon us by the particular way in which this triumph of his

opinion was achieved. When he discovered for the first time that the common impression of the sun rising and setting was contrary to fact—when he discovered that it was the sun which stands still, and the earth which moves—a thrill of horror ran through Christendom, at the contradiction of these statements with the letter of Scripture. All the alarms which have since been raised against the advance of Science were raised then. All the efforts which have since been used to maintain the letter of Scripture at the cost of its spirit were used then. Most sincere and natural, no doubt, this alarm was. But we know, thank God, that it was unfounded, and so have been all like alarms since. In the person of Galileo the battle was fought, and won. He was put down for a time, but his system prevailed, and has become the law of Christendom. The cause of religion has not lost, but gained by the triumph of the cause of science. In this way Galileo not only enlarged for us our ideas of God and the Universe, but also enlarged for us our idea of the Bible. As he raised our thoughts of God to a wider range than ever they had reached before, so he helped to raise the Bible to a higher pinnacle than it had ever reached before. It was then established once for all that the Bible was intended to teach us far higher things than mere physical science. It was then proved once for all that discoveries in the world of Nature, however important or contradictory to the letter of Scripture, *however positive*, have no connection whatever with the essence of true religion. It was acknowledged then by the most distinguished pillars of

the Church that what the Bible teaches was not how the heavens moved, but how we are to move to heaven.

‘The Bible has gained, not lost, by being disencumbered of the false theory which fastened it to false systems of philosophy. It has survived the discoveries of Galileo. It has survived, what is perhaps still more extraordinary, the follies of those who persecuted Galileo; and we may be sure that it will survive all the conclusions of science, and the blindness of those who resist these conclusions. Galileo was imprisoned and tortured for his opinions. His opinion was declared to be heresy. Even one hundred years later the Jesuits, in their great edition of Newton’s *Principia*, were obliged to say that they could not venture to accept his opinion as true, because it had been solemnly condemned by the Pope. But now even the Pope and the Jesuits have given way, and one of the best observatories of Europe, where Galileo’s principles are carried out with the best success, is the observatory of Father Secchi in the Jesuit College at Rome. We may be sure that from the gift which God gave to us in the mind of Galileo, and in the stars whose true nature Galileo revealed to us, Christianity derives a brighter, wider, better light; and as each age rolls on, and each discovery enlightens our eyes, it becomes more and more worthy of the Father of Lights, more and more the light of all mankind.

‘One further remark on Galileo’s life connects him directly with our own country, and gives another proof of the true, though indirect, relation between Science and Literature. In one of the finest of Milton’s prose works

—his speech in defence of the Liberty of the Press—he describes how in his youth he had seen the great astronomer at Florence: "There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner in the Inquisition for thinking in Astronomy otherwise than the Franciscans and Dominicans thought." It is one of the most striking scenes in literary history. The old blind Italian philosopher, victim to a dark persecution, received the young English poet, full of hope and enthusiasm; himself destined in after years to share the same calamity, the loss of the gift of eyesight, and also to be regarded by his contemporaries as an outcast and a heretic. We know that in those dreary years of blindness, and of ignominy, he never forgot his visit to Galileo. In *Paradise Lost* he dwells on the wonders which the telescope had revealed from the top of Fiesole; and we cannot doubt that this recollection must have been one of those which gave him courage to abate no jot of heart or hope, as he trod his lonely path towards the heights of everlasting fame. I have spoken of the succession of scientific light from the occurrence of Newton's birth in the year of Galileo's death. But this glimpse which the great poet gained into the mind of the great astronomer by that short visit, this stimulus which it gave him to become the champion of spiritual and intellectual freedom, is a yet more direct instance of the succession of gifted men on the largest scale. It shows that Science is not so far removed from Poetry, nor Poetry from Science, as in this scientific age one is sometimes apt to imagine.

Milton
visits
Galileo

‘ And this leads me to the third illustrious name of which I have to speak. In the same year as Galileo died, 1564, was born the greatest of all poets, William Shakespeare. Again, I do not dwell on the mere pleasure or instruction we receive from his writings. I do not enter into a criticism of his several plays. This you can read, far better than I could expound, in Dr. Johnson or in Coleridge. What I propose to ask is, what is the moral value of such a man to his country, and to the world? What was the relation of Literature as represented in this the greatest name of all Literature towards Theology and Religion? The first benefit is the fact that he was, as I have already said, the acknowledged interpreter of human nature. It is for this that we admire him, that we read him, that we place him on a height above all other poets of any age or nation. And if we ask: what is the use of this thought to us, as reasonable religious human beings? the answer is this. It teaches us that the study and knowledge of human nature are indispensable to our doing our duty, and fulfilling our appointed work in this world. It has been sometimes said that there are large classes of men who by their professions are shut out from anything but a partial view of human nature; that the clergy see the weak side of it, lawyers chiefly the dark side of it, physicians—it is sometimes said—see more than any other class. But here, at any rate, was a man who was endowed with an insight into every part of it. There is hardly a shade of feeling, hardly a human thought, scarcely a phase of character, which he

has not weighed, and balanced, and represented before us. Our admiration of such a gift is a testimony to the vast importance of that highest kind of theology, which consists of insight into and understanding of the varieties of human nature. It is a living comment—a host of comments—on the text: “Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.” It is a thorough working out of the text: “Judge righteous judgment.” It is a carrying out of the counsel “not to pull up the tares, lest in pulling up the tares we pull up the wheat also.” It is a justification of the divine charity which “bears all things, believes all things, endures all things.” It is an example of the apostolical wisdom “which becomes all things to all men.” It is a call to toleration, to forbearance, to compassion, to forgiveness. These are the truly evangelical lessons, these are the truly apostolical maxims which—whether we will or not—the writings of Shakespeare teach us.

‘This is the ample, sufficient reason why we, who have to deal with human nature as it is, should be thankful for the gift of this wonderful understanding; all human nature in the mind of this one man. If in the Bible we have been rightly taught the value of the human soul, then ought we greatly to appreciate one who has so carefully detailed all the workings of the soul, which in ourselves and in others it is our duty to elevate. If we are right in our admiration of Shakespeare, then we cannot sufficiently prize the largeness of heart, and breadth of mind, and keenness of sight, which give his works their characteristic value. We sometimes

hear people speak disparagingly of Theology and theologians. Perhaps in the sense in which those words are commonly used this disparagement is not unjust. We have already shown in what sense it is true even of such an eminent theologian as Calvin ; but, if the word "theologian" is used in its true sense—as one who sets forth the nature of God, and the duties of man—then, in that sense, our highest poets have been amongst our best theologians. He who has described the misery of jealousy in *Othello*, the madness of ambition in *Macbeth*, the grandeur of mercy in *The Merchant of Venice*, the innocence of purity in *The Tempest*, the nobleness of patriotism in *Henry V.*, and the perplexities of the troubled soul in *Hamlet*, has left to the world religious lessons far better than those of many a preacher ; because he has given them in words so persuasive, so marvellous, that they are read by hundreds whom sermons never reach, and whom tracts will never touch. There is much idle talk in the present day about secular and religious education. Is there one who will venture to shut out from any scheme of education the writings of Milton or Shakespeare ? Is there one who is able to say that the writings of Milton or Shakespeare are not in the highest sense religious, if by religious we mean that which gives a higher and wider idea of the nature of God, a deeper and clearer insight into the nature of man ? No !

‘In proportion as we are fed by the greatest writers, we rise above religious difficulty, into the most religious atmosphere of all. And this leads me to speak of one

more general lesson to be derived from the greatness of Shakespeare amid the imperfections and infirmities with which doubtless his individual life was compassed. It is this. We often ask in these days about any remarkable person we meet or hear of, what were his opinions? to what religious denomination, to what political party did he belong? Would he have voted with us, on this or that question, political or theological? What colours did he wear at the last election, or in chapel? We ask this question of ordinary men, and we often get an easy answer. We can range many of them without difficulty on one side or the other. We can even aver about such great men as Calvin or Galileo, that Calvin was a Protestant of very peculiar opinions, and that Galileo was a Roman Catholic, and in some respects compromised his opinion in order to keep well with his Church. But we make these inquiries about Shakespeare in vain. *Others abide our questions: He is free.* We see that he had a deep sense of the awfulness and greatness of God, of the tender and soothing influences of the Christian faith. We see that the words of the Bible were most familiar to him—that the sights and sounds of religious ordinances had a hold upon him. But more than this we know not. We ask whether he was a Roman Catholic or a Protestant? whether he was a Calvinist or an Arminian? whether he was a Puritan or a High Churchman? We ask, but we ask in vain. Some of his expressions lean to one side, some to another, but the whole result is that this greatest of human teachers, the wisest and greatest of human

study it, bear with it, make allowances for it ; because only in so doing can you be of service to it in others, or in yourselves. Study it in all its phases, study it either in itself or in Shakespeare's works, study it in the tragic sorrows of *King Lear*, in the remorse of *Macbeth* and *Othello*, in the deep philosophy of *Hamlet*, in the playfulness of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in the innocent love of *Romeo and Juliet*, in the calm religious resignation of *As You Like It*, in the justice and mercy of *Measure for Measure*. He takes you through many countries. He breathes the keen air of Denmark in *Hamlet*, and the majesty of Roman history in *Julius Cæsar*, the grand sweep of English history in *King John* and *Richard II.* and *Henry V.*, the sunny atmosphere of Italy in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the gay life of Greece in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the wild life of early Britain in *King Lear*, and in the blasted heath, the fierce chiefs, the haunted houses, and fantastic witchcraft of Scotland in *Macbeth*. It is from such a large view of human nature that we all gain common sense, common charity, and deeper faith. We shall not be the worse but the better Christians if by this means we are raised above those artificial boundaries which divide man from man, nation from nation, party from party, into a wider region of human sympathy ; if we can attain that true communion of the wise, in which every good and perfect gift finds its proper place ; where the main object is not to level to the ground high characters or to pull down high Institutions, but to use

them, understand them, improve them to the very utmost.

‘We thus come back to the general subject with which we started, and ask what those great characters have told us of the mutual relations of the three orders of knowledge which they respectively represent. The main result surely is that they form one whole. Theology still remains the Queen of the Sciences and Arts, as she was supposed to be in the Middle Ages. But it must be by welcoming the fact that both science and literature are themselves essential elements of theology, as theology is of them. There is a literary side and a scientific side of theology, to be conducted on scientific principles and literary principles, as also in all true science and in all high literature there is a religious side; for the pursuit of truth is religious, and so is the appreciation of the noble and the beautiful. And thus the domain of religion must be enlarged by every acquisition of scientific light, and by every ingathering of literary fruit. There will always be a separate branch of theological research, a separate branch of scientific research, and a separate branch of literary labour; but no less there will always be the need of something to reconcile, combine, and identify these. There must be the means of passing and repassing across the boundaries between them. And this neutral ground, this uniting ground, will be found in such great minds as those whom I have described, if taken at their best and their highest, and not at their worst and lowest. Taken at their lowest, Calvin was but a violent polemic,

and Galileo but a timid and half-hearted student, and Shakespeare but an obscure stage-player; but taken at their best, each one of them was a philosopher, poet, or theologian.

'The other day I saw it stated that at the tercentenary of the famous University of Leyden an orator expressed amongst other things his confident belief that theology was doomed to rapid extinction—that its fall was demanded with inexorable rigour, and that none would lament that fall. I would not disparage anything that proceeds from a University of such name and fame as Leyden; but I confess that so crude a declaration carries its own confutation with it. Such statements might fill us with alarm as to the higher and deeper thoughts of humanity, if we did not see from the terms of the expressions used by the speakers that they often mean the very reverse of what they express, that they mean only the fall of a theology which they dislike, and the rise in its place of some other theology which they desire; and that they believe—rightly, or wrongly—that Science, Literature, and the State have lights to furnish of a better kind than that which theologians and churches have furnished before. In Mr. Lecky's admirable book on the *History of Rationalism* you may remember that there is a chapter called the "Secularisation of Politics"; and at first sight it might seem that, like the Dutch orator, he was intending to prove that politics, and all that is included in that word, were all to be removed from the influence of religion; but when you find that what he means is simply that the course of

European politics has been purged and purified from the rancour, persecution and inhumanity, perfidy and cruelty of the Thirty Years' War, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew ; that commerce has been set free from the superstitious restrictions on usury ; and social life delivered from the insane superstitions concerning witchcraft, then we may fairly say that the tendency is not the secularisation, but the Christianisation of politics. Therefore, the result of all such harsh and exaggerated statements as that I have quoted just now is, to any reflecting and high-minded man, not to endeavour to divorce science from religion, or the Church from the State, but to endeavour to infuse into religion whatever truth there is in science, and to endeavour to infuse into the Church whatever there is of grandeur and elevation in the State.

‘ And I may add that it is in fulfilling these functions that not only such great men as I have described, but also ancient and famous Universities, and University influences such as give a name to your Club, are so useful ; it is because the Universities of Europe, amidst whatever imperfections they contain—it is because the University of Oxford, in which, as you have heard, I first became acquainted with your excellent chairman, my dear and early friend, Principal Shairp—it is because the Universities of Scotland, amid all the distractions and divisions of this country, have furnished, and do furnish still, a neutral, central, and elevated ground, where the different Churches and diverging classes can be drawn together and aspire towards higher things,

that they deserve all the support and all the forbearance that can be given them. As the poet says,

Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
That dote upon each other, friends to man,
Living together under the same roof,
And never can be sundered without tears.

‘And if for one passing moment I may speak of what I may now fairly call my own University of St. Andrews, before you—the generous, energetic, and aspiring citizens of Dundee—allow me to say that no better exemplification could be given of the principle which I have been endeavouring to enforce than the relation between the two places. They are exemplified, I might also say visibly, to the outward eye as in a parable. What is the barrier that divides them? Listen to my parable. The first answer is very simple. It is the river Tay. And what is the means of uniting them? It is by the bridge which shall in a few years turn Fifeshire from an island into the mainland. But the Tay is not, or was not in the olden time, the only dividing boundary. When yesterday from the heights of Magus Moor, from the beautiful grounds of Mount Melville, I overlooked the plains of Fifeshire and Forfarshire, I saw two streams parting the towers of St. Andrews from the smoke of Dundee. One, as I have said, was the Tay; and the other was the river Eden. But in the Middle Ages the smaller gulf, impassable as it may have seemed, was crossed by the bridge—which was then the marvel of Scotland—the bridge built by Bishop Wardlaw, the founder of the University of St. Andrews.

‘That union which seemed then so difficult ought to prepare us for the union, which is now not more difficult in the bridge over the greater gulf which still remains. What the science of the fifteenth century effected across the Eden the science of the nineteenth century is to effect across the Tay. Is not all this a transparent allegory of the subject of which we have been speaking, and of some of the questions which naturally have arisen amongst ourselves? A bridge, whether over the Tay or over the Eden, is an emblem of the moral bonds of union, whether in the great world or in our smaller world at home; and in making and increasing these moral bonds it is surely the privilege of the wisdom and the charity of the nineteenth century to effect the combination which the charity and wisdom of the Middle Ages most imperfectly effected in the fifteenth century, whether as regards the relations between the academic community of Dundee, or as regards the larger elements of Religion, Science, and Literature.’

Since this chapter was written I have—through the kindness of the present Dean of Westminster—seen and examined the MS. which his predecessor had with him in Dundee. It was originally prepared for another purpose, but I have no knowledge, and now no means of finding out, to what audience it was first addressed. As given at Dundee it was recast, and considerably enlarged.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

WE, the English men and women of the twentieth century, are so much indebted to Matthew Arnold—for his poetry, his literary criticism, and his letters posthumously published—that we fain would gather up every fragment of reminiscence that remains of him, 'that none of them may be lost.'

As one of his predecessors in the poetical hierarchy put it,

His very memory is fair and bright,

and there was a charm in his personality that was all his own, and is singularly radiant still. The deftest of critics, a chivalrous appraiser of merit, a satirist who was humorist at heart and who never sent a barbed arrow from his bow, brave and patient, assiduous in the discharge of irksome duties, most loyal of friends, and generous in kindest deeds.

Insight as keen as frosty star
Was to his charity no bar,

while reverence dominated his nature from first to last.

His reiterated message of 'sweetness and light,' his constant demand for 'lucidity,' his insistence on 'culture as the sovereign panacea alike for our 'Philistines, Barbarians and Populace,' his substitution of the 'stream

of tendency' and the 'not-ourselves that makes for righteousness,' in place of what he thought were the superannuated terms of ancestral religion—all this raised a barrier between him and many other men; but even they must admit that, in his polemic he aimed always at the truth of things, and that in all of it he was constructive.

His poems may have taught his generation more than his prose essays have done, and their appreciation in America has been signal. They are perhaps more widely read, and highly valued across the Atlantic than in England.

The few letters from Arnold which follow refer chiefly to Wordsworth, and to the Wordsworth Society. We once had a talk about *Thyrsis*. He said that when he wrote it, he doubted whether it would be popular, however genuine it was as an idyllic elegy. It was less complete as a memorial of Clough than *Rugby Chapel* was of his father, or than his lines on Wordsworth were of him. It dealt with only one side of Clough's nature. Some time afterwards, when I was writing *Principal Shairp's Life* his widow sent me a letter from Arnold to her husband, dated April 1866—soon after *Thyrsis* appeared—embodying the same thought.

Arnold was asked to allow himself to be nominated for the St. Andrews Lord Rectorship in 1877. He declined on the ground that, in his opinion, his position as a school-inspector disqualified him for suitably filling the post. He thought that one who held office

in the public service of the country ought not also to hold 'that post of high dignity.' He added, 'The department which I serve has always left me perfect freedom in my literary publications. In return I consider myself bound to abstain from all appearances on the stage of public life ; and your Rector, in making his address, must certainly be considered as appearing on the stage.'

We at St. Andrews, professors and students alike, thought that a mistake on his part. There was nothing in his official position, any more than in that of a member of Parliament or a Judge, to prevent his acceptance of the Rectorship. He would have been received with enthusiasm, and would certainly have given a brilliant and luminous address. The loss was to St. Andrews, and to Scotland.

Arnold's life was uneventful, but perhaps all the richer on that account. Once, at a dinner of old Balliol men, he spoke of himself as 'an instance of a Balliol *failure* in life.' It need hardly be said that as poet, critic, essayist, his success had been greater than that of anyone present, and his own judgment was disallowed. The failure was only in receiving the due rewards of authorship. It has been the lot of many of our greatest writers to have a routine of drudgery to go through, and it is a lasting tribute to Arnold that he never grudged it, but discharged the humblest duties of school-inspector with as much care and assiduity as he spent upon his literary work.

There was one characteristic of Matthew Arnold

which all who knew him understood and appreciated. It was his determination to get at the root and truth of things underneath the shows which are commonly wrapped around them, and the illusions which are so constantly mistaken for them. This was in curious alliance with a dislike for what he considered the dimness of metaphysic, and indifference to the bald obviousness of science: but there was coupled with it a still greater dislike of all irreverence towards the beliefs and the institutions of the past. He wished to rouse his contemporaries out of facile credence, and contentment with commonplaces that were the superficial makeshifts of belief; but none of them had a more intense feeling of the seriousness of life, and the grave issues of conduct. He wished to see them rest in a religion that was based on fact, not underpropped by conjecture. To attain to a lucid belief, and one that could be verified, was his constant aim; and yet he would rather leave everything as he found it, than have religion discarded, or emptied of all significance, by a criticism that was purely negative. I remember, and can now hear, his musical quotation of the lines,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
Her early Heaven, her happy views;
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.

Arnold was not a great speaker, or a good reader; but I have been told that when he went to lecture in America, and was at first almost inaudible beyond the front-row benches, one of his auditors called on him, and offered to teach him 'the art of public speaking'!

So
C.H. White
told me
"you"
S.

He was amused, but took the hint, and submitted to a few 'lessons,' with the result that he was soon heard throughout most lecture-halls.

The mention of America recalls his popularity there as a poet. In Boston I found that many cultivated men and women ranked him as chief in the modern English hierarchy of song. It was a group of Americans also who principally welcomed the reading of part of his *Empedocles on Etna* one day within the Græco-Roman theatre of Taormina in Sicily.

The following are extracts from a few of his letters to me.

'Athenæum Club, Pall Mall, S.W.: July 12, 1879.

' . . . There is plenty of room for all of us as recommenders of Wordsworth, and it would have been indeed a pity if you had withheld your book about him, or any part of it. I hope to return to it, when I am in the North this autumn. It is a book to be read in Wordsworth's own country.

* * * * *

' P.S.—The paper in *Macmillan* is to serve as preface to a volume of selections from Wordsworth which I have in the press. It is not an elaborate criticism of Wordsworth's poetry, but the sort of essay which seemed to me best calculated to introduce, and help, such a volume. You must read it with this view of its character and design.'

A second time our students at St. Andrews tried to induce him to become Rector, a new generation of them endeavouring to secure the honour previously declined.

He replied :

' Cobham, Surrey : April 4, 1883.

' . . . I have answered an Edinburgh Association, as to my being brought forward for the Lord Rectorship there, but I am resolved not to be a candidate for that office while I am a school-inspector, or a subordinate public official of any sort. I have formerly said the same thing in answer to proposals from St. Andrews, and you would do me a kindness if you would assure my friends there that, though I am grateful to them for their good opinion, my resolution remains quite firm.'

The following has reference to the meeting of the Wordsworth Society, of which he was President in 1883 :

' Cobham, Surrey : April 28.

' Two papers will be plenty ; a paper from the President besides would be too much, and I think the President should *speak*, not *read*. I will try to make a speech of about a quarter of an hour in length, to open the proceedings . . . '

He was asked his opinion as to the *Stanzas written in my pocket copy of Thomson's 'Castle of Indolence'* in which Wordsworth describes Coleridge and himself ; there being some difference of opinion as to the relevancy of the 'descriptive sketches' contained in them. He replied :

' Cobham, Surrey : May 26.

' When one looks uneasily at a poem it is easy to fidget oneself further, and neither the Wordsworth nor the Coleridge of our common notions seems to be hit off

in the *Stanzas* ; still, I believe that the first described is Wordsworth, and that the second described is Coleridge. I have myself heard Wordsworth speak of his prolonged, exhausting wanderings among the hills. Then Miss Fenwick's note shows that Coleridge is certainly *one* of the two personages of the poem, and there are points in the description of the second man which suit him very well. The *profound forehead* is a touch akin to the *god-like forehead* in the mention of Coleridge in a later poem.

'I have a sort of recollection of having heard something about the "inventions rare," and Coleridge is certain to have dabbled, at one time or other, in Natural Philosophy.

'I could have wished, handicapped as I am (I write this while the Epsom races are going on) with official work, to keep clear of all literary societies, but it seemed ungracious to refuse the nomination you speak of, and it is a long time to next May.'

'Athenæum Club, Pall Mall, S.W. : April 29, 1884.

'I cannot possibly be at the meeting on the 8th, but I assure you that Lord Coleridge, if you can get him, will be a far better introducer of Mr. Lowell than I could be.'

* * * * *

'Fairy Hill, Swansea : September 29, 1884.

'... Never to have seen St. Andrews is a real shortcoming, and I wish I could have accepted your kind invitation ; I was in Haddingtonshire the other

day, and looking across towards your University, but there was no one there then ! '

* * * * *

'Athenæum Club, Pall Mall, S.W. : October 6, 1884.

'Your kind invitation reached me in the ends of South Wales. I at once answered it to say that my days in Scotland would be few, as my schools here will be wanting me back, and that I had engaged myself to stay with Lord Dalhousie during my Dundee visit. I wrote to Braemar, but put *to be forwarded* on the letter. I wish I could come to you, but it is impossible.'

* * * * *

'Cobham, Surrey : November 17, 1886.

'I shall be much interested in seeing your Selection, but I am not inclined to return to the criticism of our dear Poet, and I am sure it is better that, in the volume now in question, I should not.'

* * * * *

'November 19, 1886.

'... I am touched by what you tell me of dear old Shairp. He had come to look upon me as a very lost sheep, so his fidelity to my verse is the more sweet in him.'

* * * * *

'Athenæum Club, Pall Mall : July 20, 1887.

'Mrs. Shairp or her son wrote to me some time ago asking me to give my remembrances of my old friend in the form of a letter, to be used in his Life ; and I answered, as I must answer now, and as I have also

answered in the case of a like application concerning Theodore Walrond, that it does not come natural to me to speak of my dead friends in this fashion, and that what one does not do naturally one never does well. Some day or other, and in some manner, I should like to say a word or two about both Shairp and Walrond, for each of whom I had a sincere affection; but when I shall feel able to do it, or how, I cannot say.

‘I am very glad you are preparing a memoir of Shairp; he was not only a lovable man in the time when I knew him best, but a very stimulative and inspiring one.’

* * * * *

‘Pains Hill Cottage, Cobham, Surrey: November 4, 1887.

‘In writing the life of Wordsworth you are filling a real gap. I looked at his nephew’s two volumes again in the summer; they are impossible.’

In his conversation, as well as his writings, the eulogy of *Geist* came out, and his constant demand for *lucidity* as the outcome of insight. He held that intellectual discernment, purified mental vision, led of necessity to lucid statement as to the reasons of things; and the two together—adequate knowledge, on the one hand, and its expression ‘*clare et distincte*’ on the other—gave both strength and quietude, and were the key to progress.

Soon after Matthew Arnold’s death a few of his friends thought that funds should be raised for a memorial to him in the form of a medallion or bust, and—if the subscriptions warranted it—the founding of an Arnold scholarship or lectureship at Oxford.

A preliminary meeting—largely attended—was held at the Jerusalem Chamber at Westminster Abbey, and a committee elected to promote the objects aimed at. The first thing the committee tried was to find out what anything could be done, through the Treasury, to obtain a pension for Mrs. Arnold, in recognition of her husband's contributions to Literature, and his services to the State as school-inspector. As this unfortunately failed, Chief Justice Coleridge, who was chairman of the committee, convened a meeting in his room at the Law Courts, to consider what should be done, and afterwards addressed the following letter to the *Times*, on June 25, 1888:

'The Matthew Arnold Memorial.'

'Sir,—The many friends and admirers of Matthew Arnold have delayed till now taking any active steps to collect subscriptions, in accordance with the resolutions passed at the meeting held in the Jerusalem Chamber. They were desirous first to ascertain what any and what recognition of Mr. Arnold's great services to the State and to English Literature, in the form of a pension to his widow, would be granted by the First Lord of the Treasury. The answer to two memorials, signed without distinction of party by a large number of the most prominent men in the country, has just been received, to the effect that Mr. Smith can do nothing. Such an answer to such memorials—an answer based chiefly, though not exclusively, on want of precedent—somewhat unexpected by those of us whose memories

back for twenty-five or thirty years, and will not, perhaps, be altogether satisfying to those who appreciate the very remarkable qualities of the distinguished man for whose memory this recognition was requested. It renders, however, prompt action necessary on the part of his friends.

‘A meeting, to which all the committee were summoned, was accordingly held on Wednesday last, at my room in the Law Courts—the Earl of Derby in the chair. The meeting was attended by Lord Lingen, Lord Justice Bowen, Mr. Lushington, Mr. Cumin, Mr. Fyffe, Mr. Hutton, Professor Knight, Mr. G. Murray Smith, Mr. George Russell (the honorary secretary), and myself.

‘The following minute was passed, and will be advertised and circulated, for the information of those who may desire to contribute towards keeping alive the memory of one of the noblest and most interesting characters of our time. The reply of Mr. Smith makes it, in our opinion, desirable to postpone—at least for the present—that part of the scheme shadowed forth in the Jerusalem Chamber which relates to Oxford.

‘I subjoin the minute: “The appropriation of the funds obtained cannot be absolutely determined at present, but it is desired by the committee, in the first instance, to place in Westminster Abbey a Medallion or Bust, as may be found most convenient; next, to make adequate provision for Mrs. Arnold: lastly, after providing for the foregoing objects (should the funds obtained be sufficient) to found at Oxford an Arnold Scholarship or Lectureship, with a view to promote the study of English Literature. It is estimated that the

cost of the Medallion or Bust will not exceed 500*l.* including all attendant expenses.

‘COLBRIDGE.’

A bust was made by Mr. Bruce Joy, who was chosen out of several competitors to execute it, and was placed in the Baptistery of Westminster Abbey. The residue of the fund—which amounted in all to 6,000*l.*—was handed over to Mrs. Arnold, who sent a portion of it to Oxford for the establishment of a prize, to be called the ‘Matthew Arnold Memorial Prize,’ the competition to be open to those who have taken the B.A. degree, and the subject of the essay to be selected in turn by the Vice-Chancellor, the Headmaster of Rugby, and the Poet Laureate. She wrote thus to the Honorary Secretary:

‘I must ask you to assure the committee and subscribers how deeply I am touched and gratified by the way in which all, even strangers as well as personal friends, have testified their affection and admiration for my husband. He would have been greatly touched by it, and would have felt as deeply gratified as I do by the generous kindness shown to me. It is a comfort to me in my sorrow that the memory of all he was, and of all he did, will be cherished by so many, and will have a lasting memorial in the Abbey.’

W. E. GLADSTONE

THE world has recently received so great a biography of Mr. Gladstone from a distinguished man of letters, who was also a political colleague and comrade, that it may seem useless, if not presumptuous, to add anything in reference to him. Doubtless, however, many other critical estimates, and biographic material, will be forthcoming; and it may not be superfluous for me to give one or two brief reminiscences.

I recall his address as Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh in 1860. The undergraduates, and the *Senatus Academicus*, were swayed by it in a remarkable manner. The representatives of both political parties were at one in their admiration for the intellectual intensity, the eloquence, and elevation of the address. Of course, we youths all took sides in politics. I was then on Mr. Gladstone's side, and remember sitting beside a fellow student of the opposition, who came with me intensely prejudiced, but was soon captivated by the oration, and even magnetised by the personality of the speaker. One month afterwards Lord Brougham addressed the University, in the

office of Chancellor ; and we all remember the contrast between the ponderous forensic argumentation of the great lawyer, and the agile thrusts and persuasive oratory of Gladstone.

I first made his acquaintance by the publisher's having sent him a copy of a small volume issued in the year 1863—viz. *Poems from the Dawn of English Literature to the Year 1699*. It was published anonymously, and in February 1863 Mr. Gladstone wrote that, although he did not know whom he was addressing, he sent his best thanks for the selection and its introduction. He approved of the contents, and wished the volume every possible success.

I well remember a dinner-party in London at which Mr. Gladstone was the principal guest, although there were many representatives of Literature and Science as well as Politics present. After dinner the conversation turned to the number of lines in the great poems of the world ; and Mr. Gladstone was asked : How many are there in the *Iliad* ? He at once replied, and to a second question gave the number in the *Odyssey*. 'In the *Divine Comedy*?' inquired one guest. Instantly the number in the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso* were told. In *Hamlet*, *Paradise Lost*, *Faust* (I only remember these), the answer came without a pause, as if out of a brain in compartments, where the facts had been stored away, and which now opened as by a spring. I was asked by our host if I could tell

the number in *The Excursion* and in *The Prelude*, and by some one else how many there were in *The White Doe of Rylstone*. In each case I had to shake my head in ignorance. I said it had never occurred to me to estimate poems by their quantity. 'No,' said Gladstone, 'none of us do that—the test is a qualitative one—but literary statistics are always of use.' It seemed to me, however, as if the instinct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been at work in the brain of the Premier in reference to the great poems of the world, and that the chambers of memory were full to overflowing. On telling this afterwards at St. Andrews to his old Oxford tutor—Bishop Charles Wordsworth—he said that Gladstone's memory was superlative. 'I remember sending him, to the country house in which he was then residing, a Latin version which I had just written of one of the hymns in the *Christian Year*. He replied at once, and quoted in his letter another excellent rendering of the same hymn in Latin, made long ago by a friend of his, which he said was still as vivid to him as if he had received it yesterday.'

When writing Wordsworth's Life, I asked Mr. Gladstone whether he had any letters from the poet which he cared to show me, as I knew that he had been instrumental in aiding him in various ways, obtaining his pension from the Civil List, &c. He kindly sent me seven letters, and some memoranda as to his circumstances supplied by Wordsworth, for use in the biography

which he was glad to hear was in hand, wishing all success to 'the deeply interesting work.'

Four of these letters are published in volume iii. of my *Life of Wordsworth*, pp. 328, 340, 426, and 427; and a letter from Mr. Gladstone to Wordsworth on the Copyright Bill will be found on p. 389. The following reached me a few days after I received them:

'Hawarden: January 17, 1887.

'I thank you for the very prompt return of the Wordsworth letters. I have no objection to the publication, as you recommend it, but see below. You are aware that I cannot give you an affirmative title to publish. My advice is that nothing should be published about Lord Monteagle's relation to the Premier. It is better, I think, passed over.

'Nor, if I denounced anyone for Schism, should I wish this to be published as a fragment, though I should have no objection if it were coupled with what I have written since.

'I was an eager supporter of Serjeant Talfourd, but have long since altered my view; and am of opinion that a more free system of copyright than the present one is possible, and would be more advantageous to the author, the trade, and the public.

'With regard to Wordsworth's circumstances I conclude you would print nothing, in the way of particulars, except with the approval of his nearest representative.

'As Minister I have always held that Civil List

pensions cannot be given to literary men on the score of need, and I never asked proof of need. . . .'

When I asked Mr. Gladstone's permission to publish his letters to Wordsworth, he granted it cordially as proposed, and they will be found in the poet's *Life*.

He also wrote about Henry Taylor, Miss Fenwick, the subject of Copyright, on which he thought the method of Talfourd and the present law faulty, and in regard to Schism wished me to state, on his behalf, that after fifty intervening years he could not now express himself as he had done. He mentioned that in 1838 he was a fervent student of the great Italian poet Dante, and should have remembered that it is upon the *authorship* of schism that he bestows malediction.

The only other letter from which I need make an extract refers to a book which I wrote on *The Philosophy of the Beautiful*, and it is quoted merely because it indicates Mr. Gladstone's belief on the subject :

'Hawarden : October 30, 1891.

'I thank you very much for the work you have kindly sent me. I have at once commenced it. . . . A strong and old believer in Beauty as an ultimate reality, not less than Truth or than Goodness, I am, I hope, well prepared to profit by your instructions. . . .'

In the course of one conversation Mr. Gladstone said

L.

P

and an annual visit to it, there might have been no Irish grievance. Mr. Gladstone replied : ' At least we should not have heard so much about it. The Irish are at heart a loyal race, and quick to respond to kindness of every sort.'

WILLIAM DAVIES

To Dora Greenwell of Durham—of whom I hope to write in a subsequent volume—I owe my knowledge of two remarkable men of original character, and rare ideality, viz. William Davies and James Smetham. The former was a friend of hers, and of her brother Alan. I visited him at Warrington in the sixties, and at Chester in the nineties, of last century ; and corresponded with him a good deal. He edited many interesting and original letters by our friend Smetham ; but his own, now reproduced in part, seem to me more remarkable still. Before quoting from them, I should mention one or two facts about his life. He was born at Warrington and educated in its Grammar School. Destined for a mercantile career, he began life in a bank, where he remained for some years. During these years he also studied painting, and was more interested in Art than in business, helping to establish the Warrington School of Art. All along he felt the uncongenial strain of a mercantile life, and—as will be abundantly seen in his letters—he longed to secure a modest competence, and retire from business. At length he was able to do so, and went during each summer to the Continent, to study

in the art-galleries, and to sketch the surrounding scenery, usually spending his winters in London. He wrote occasional articles at this time in the *Quarterly Review*, and made many close friendships; his knowledge of Dante Gabriel Rossetti having perhaps the most determining influence on his future. Delicacy of health at last induced him to leave England altogether, and, following the advice of Rossetti, he settled in Rome.

There he led a varied and highly intellectual life, unambitious, and unselfish. In 1869 he finished his first book, which he called, *Songs of a Wayfarer*, a work full of poetic insight and melody. It was followed in 1873 by the *Pilgrimage of the Tiber*—beginning at Ostia, and ending at the river's source—illustrated by drawings of his own, and others supplied by friends, a most delightful book of art-travel. At the source of the historic river an old guide led him to a little rill from which it flows, and leaning on his staff pointed to the water and said 'E questo si chiama il Tevere a Roma!' ('And this they call the Tiber at Rome!') In the same year, 1873, *The Shepherd's Garden* was published; which was followed, in 1875, by *A fine old English Gentleman*.

The *Letters of James Smetham* were issued by him in 1891, with a singularly interesting memorial notice of his friend prefixed to them. His last work was entitled *The Pilgrim of the Infinite*, published in 1894. As will be seen from his letters, he had a stroke of paralysis at Rome in 1892, from which he recovered so far as to be able to settle in Cheshire, first at

To him the wealth of the world, its honours, and the objects of its desire, will be less than little. He will see the noble beyond the mean, the permanent beyond the changeable. Satisfied, stable, helpful to others, restful within himself, he will look upon life as an education, time as his instructor, the world as his school. This is the teaching of the Vedas, as it is of the noblest religion, the highest philosophy.'

In 1862 I was preparing the first book I ventured to issue, entitled *Poems from the Dawn of English Literature to the Year 1699*. As I had met Mr. Davies before that year, and knew his wide acquaintance with English Literature, I corresponded with him on the subject of the proposed extracts. He wrote to me :

' Sankey Street, Warrington : June 23, 1862.

* * * * *

' I have often thought a very excellent volume of devotional poetry might be selected from secular writers alone. As a curiosity it would be valuable, to say the least of it ; but I am not quite sure whether certain sections of our modern religious world would find any value in it beyond that. What, *e.g.*, could be finer than the hymn entitled " Resignation," by the wild boy Chatterton ? Yet I never saw it brought into the Churches. It begins :

O God whose thunder shakes the sky,
Whose eye this atom globe surveys.

I suppose this writer is out of your limits, but I believe he has several noble things of this sort not often printed.

'Do you know it strikes me that any of the old dramatists will as little bear selecting from as Shakespeare or Milton. The same speech in a character elaborated through a certain series of influences may sound vastly different in one developed through quite another series. It is rather in the broad characters of noble or degraded, selfish or liberal *actualisms*, than in definite assertion of principles, that the forte of the "old dramatist" lies; not that the latter are altogether absent from their writings; but they form no array of well-rounded actuating principles, to be culled out and placed on another page to fair advantage. I am not quite sure, however, whether isolated lines and fragmentary passages would agree with your plan.

'Amongst the older dramatic writers who are the least read may be mentioned John Marston, whose muscular grasp of language often verges upon the uncouth. Disfigured by the broadest and coarsest possible passages, there may yet be found in his plays passages of surpassing beauty and fine moral force. For instance, in his *Antonio and Mellida*, 1st part, 4th act, beginning :

'Tis not the bared pate, the bended knees,
Gilt tipstaves, Tyrian purple, chairs of state,
Troops of pied butterflies, that flutter still
In greatness' summer, that confirme a prince,

and so on for half a page. This can scarcely be called religious poetry; though it is moral, of a high order. There are many fine lines and expressions to be found in this writer, but not one lyric piece to serve your

readers. Good poetry is positively common. One meets with a conciseness of diction, mellifluousness of versification, high powers of imagination displayed very generally; but that it has little hold on the popular mind is quite as true. One reason is this. Poetry is an æsthetic thing, and just as we turn to a fine statue, or painting, or noble strain of music over and over again, with renewed pleasure and a better appreciation, so it is with the best kinds of Poetry. Prose is a mirror of the age, an incarnation of the present; Poetry is a thing for all time, and appeals to every age alike. So, if I wish the kind of influence Poetry gives, instead of buying the last new volume of verses, I turn up my Chaucer or Keats, my Fletcher or Shakespeare, and defy any age or time or man to give me more pleasure. Not that I would try to stem the tide of poetical production, but I would doubly strain, and sift well, all poetical writing. . . .'

* * * * *

The following are extracts from letters written afterwards :

'Warrington : November 22, 1862.

' . . . I had a vague sort of presentiment that you might turn up. Indeed, passing the station about the time that your train was due, I turned in to meet you in case the destinies had been kinder than they proved ; and tried to console myself for your non-appearance by persuading myself I had not expected you ! I have sacrificed and do sacrifice so much in life that is con-

'Of Spenser, too, I need say as little—his passage of the watchfulness of the angels in the *Faerie Queene*,

And is there care in heaven,

the noble sermon of Artagale,

Of things unseen how canst thou deeme aright,

and others of his minor poems. Doubtless Sir Henry Wotton will not be forgotten. His

Farewell, ye gilded follies,

quoted in Walton's *Complete Angler*, is a gem of the first water. All the best lyrics of the older dramatists are to be found in Bell's *Songs of the Dramatists*—a delicious collection of that kind of poetry. I may mention *Idleness*, by Heywood, at p. 29; *Sweet Content*, p. 189; *A Dirge*, "Glories, pleasures, pomps," &c., p. 211; "Victorious men of Earth," p. 226; "The glories of our birth," p. 227, as possibly suitable for your purpose. Have you seen Joshua Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas, and others of his works? Andrew Marvell and George Wither might furnish you with something.

'Our old stores of serious poetry have been thoroughly ransacked, and, being very limited in comparison with other kinds, have, I fancy, all the more diligently been brought before modern readers; so that one has no right to expect very much that is quite new to the generality of readers. . . .'

In the same year he wrote—

'Warrington: August 6, 1862.

'Unfortunately, much excellent poetry of to-day lacks

readers. Good poetry is positively common. One meets with a conciseness of diction, mellifluousness of versification, high powers of imagination displayed very generally; but that it has little hold on the popular mind is quite as true. One reason is this. Poetry is an æsthetic thing, and just as we turn to a fine statue, or painting, or noble strain of music over and over again, with renewed pleasure and a better appreciation, so it is with the best kinds of Poetry. Prose is a mirror of the age, an incarnation of the present; Poetry is a thing for all time, and appeals to every age alike. So, if I wish the kind of influence Poetry gives, instead of buying the last new volume of verses, I turn up my Chaucer or Keats, my Fletcher or Shakespeare, and defy any age or time or man to give me more pleasure. Not that I would try to stem the tide of poetical production, but I would doubly strain, and sift well, all poetical writing. . . .'

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sistently unattainable, that I feel that it is difficult to assign limits to the amount of sacrifice made necessary in the whole length of it. Whilst it is possible, it is by no means certain that we shall be thrown together frequently; I think, however, that neither of us would have the greatest and best gift for friendship if we did not feel the relationship to be a very deep and solemn one fostered only through mutual joy and sorrow, and profound experience of life, not through mere concord of opinion, or a similarity of tastes and pursuits alone...

* * * * *

‘If my holidays were not limited to once a year—the north and south lay nearer to each other—I should visit you in Scotland. I recollect with a sense of their incompleteness my lonely rambles in the Highlands, of bygone years; through desolate valleys whose stony silence was oppressive, by twisting rivers whose appealing tones seemed to ask for an overflow of human emotion to render them intelligible, through gorgeous sunsets whose glowing radiance—as it lingered about the bald mountain-tops—required “the still sad music of humanity” to explain its true significance. All these were felt and enjoyed intensely by me; but with what an added glory and significance might they have spoken in the company of one breathing the freshness of the morning with joy, and welcoming the restful evening with gladness.

‘Perhaps we are taught self-dependence, and a high trust, by being left alone; but the heart is gregarious

and we all love companionship. I may never see your noble-hearted friend, but I should like to persuade myself that we may meet sometime under the changeless circumstances of an unfettered state of being.

‘I do not know whether I explained to you my views of life; or at all accounted for them, if I did. I am here at an occupation far from congenial to me, although I perform its duties, I hope, sufficiently well. Severed from Art, from Nature, from many elevating and ennobling influences which I am fitted to receive, in a climate irritating to my physique, with only one thing—which I am afraid is almost everything, after all!—to leave with deep regret. The latter is my circle of kind, good, and noble friends, who will never be replaced to me; nor, if absent, be entirely separated from me. I shall never find another circle so congenial and sympathetic.

• • • • •
‘Probably in somewhat less than two years I may take up my residence for a while in the art cities of Italy.
• • • • •

‘Do you think I may place it amongst my dreams that we shall stand under the dome of St. Peter’s together, or walk round the Coliseum under a bluer sky?
• • • • •

‘I have no wish to be idle in life: the reverse of it: but I wish to be occupied by the use of those faculties that God has gifted me withal, and not have to smother

the better half of my being for the exercise of its inferior part. If I live I hope my final field of labor may lie chiefly or wholly in London, with artistic or literary occupation such as I love.

* * * * *

‘I am in the middle of Dora Greenwell’s book.’¹ I like it even better than its predecessors. I feel little inclined to play the critic over a good work well done. In its circle it is all that can be desired ; but one must not forget that it is written in a circle—wide enough I daresay, for most of us, but with discernible limits. The great want of nearly every literary person is thorough acquaintance with the general principles of Science. The acts and laws of God, in regard to what He has made, are surely worth studying ; and we often perceive in a discourse upon abstract matters how a knowledge of this or that fact or law of the external world would have considerably modified, or altogether altered, opinions stated in the most unconditional manner. For instance, theologians almost always speak of the soul as an isolated and perfectly different existence from anything else in the universe. It is not so. The vitality of a leaf, in an infinitely inferior degree, is the vitality of the soul ; they are both the breath of God. The circulation of the blood is a reproduction in a lower form of memory and the continuity of thought. I mean to say the same laws that control the external world in another form govern the human

¹ *Two Friends*.

soul in its courses. It must be so. God has only one law fundamentally, which must be right and true, whether exercised in the circulation of water in the ocean, or of blood in human veins; and the same is reproduced in the highest forms of existence. This is not pantheism, nor leads to it; nor materialism, though it look like it. God is enough for himself, for his creation, and for his creatures; and deals himself out to all, according to their several needs. All Science is a kind of Religion; and the dangers of worshipping Religion, and not God, are just as great as—and more than—the dangers of worshipping Science, or the results to which it leads.

‘Before concluding, however, let me answer your questions about the etchings. They are done by Mr. James Smetham, 1 Park Lane, Paradise Row, Stoke Newington, London N., and published by him. If you have ever nothing better to do, and write him a line to let him know what you think of his works, he would, I know, be much gratified; and, if he was in the mood for writing, you might get a letter back, which you would like to receive. Do not, however, request him to send you the etchings: the series of which, I believe, will shortly be completed by a dozen; as, if I go up to London in the spring, I should like to obtain them for you myself, and see to their safe transmission.

* * * * *

‘I notice, as a rule in life, that hot correspondence falls almost always away; but the occasional interchange

of letters, which does not interfere with the business of life, is useful and good. I shall put no definite time or conditions on hearing from you, neither must you claim the same from me; but I hope we shall hear from each other, when occasion serves. "For as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man's countenance doth that of his friend"; and I consider a letter the next best thing to the countenance, though a very imperfect and to some extent unsatisfactory mode of communication.'

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Warrington : 19 January, 1863.

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'I thank you greatly for your book,¹ which is much more valuable to me than if I had bought it. I am quite determined, however, not to exhaust the pleasure of reading it at once; but rather to let it lie on my table, open it at a blank moment, and find every time a choice diamond in fittest setting of right words. I do not think you ought quite to exclude the four names mentioned in your preface. Because they have written much that is good is scarcely a reason that we should have none. Two or three from George Herbert—say *The Flower* and *The Pulley*—one or two from Shakespeare, a sonnet or fragment not quoted quite every day, and a passage from *Comus*, would be no more familiar than Shirley's "The glories of our birth and state," and Herrick's "Fair Daffodils." Th

¹ The *Poems from the Dawn*.

very names would add fragrance to the volume, and completeness, I think.

‘The binding, I think, bears very much the character of the Jones, Morris, and Rossetti society who are trying to get at the simplicity in design of the Middle Ages. The motto is just the thing ; but I think the vignette might have been better. Still it will do.

* * * * *

‘I received also a copy of Mr. Wilson’s lecture delivered at West Hurlet,¹ which is a really noble production, full of deep and earnest truth. When you see him, please convey to him my very cordial sympathies and very best thanks. With one thing in his pamphlet I do not agree. He thinks *thought* ought not to be bought, but given. The labourer, however, must live by his occupation. Nay more, I do not see why thought should be given, any more than that bread should be given, which is a necessity before and beyond thought.

* * * * *

‘I shall be very glad to hear of your being fixed in a congenial sphere. Not idleness, freedom from definite duty, a perfectly sympathetic moral and intellectual atmosphere, constitute the most desirable blessings ; but rather a field of labour in harmony with the highest powers of work and influence within us. This is man’s noblest destiny, to work in such a field with all his powers and energies, and not to work in vain.

‘We shall be glad, indeed, to see you for as long a

¹ On Work and Money.

time as you can make stay, when you come south your Wordsworthian pilgrimage. It is now many years since I stood at his grave. Indeed, it was very short after his death. Whilst yet a boy I spent a fortnight amongst the English Lakes alone. It was the first time I had ever been so long companionless, but I cannot tell you how much more impressive everything became on that account. I think I learnt more of the mystery, glory, and lofty teaching of Nature, in that short time, than I have ever learnt since. Like a gnome or earth-spirit, I seemed to be part and parcel of all that was around me, whether my vision soared over the undulating spread of mountain, lake, and valley, or whether I sat hour-long by the side of running water, or read their marvellous lessons from flower and leaf.

'Have you ever read Wordsworth's *Prelude*?' need scarcely ask you. There are some very noble passages in it, in deeper sympathy—nay, absolute union—with Nature than is to be found in all Literature. But, do you know, I do not frequently turn to Wordsworth as my expositor of Nature. He always seems to me as if he made it a business to be poetical. Keep for instance—although he knew no more of the meaning of Nature than a butterfly—often places me nearer the essence than Wordsworth does. But perhaps those who understand Nature the best—or at least in the best way—who come as men from amongst men; not scholars, philosophers, and dreamers, but those who come from the occupations, activities, littlenesses, and greatnesses as they exist now on Mart and Change, in City, Town,

and village—who come from the regions in which men talk of corn and beef, politics and railway shares. I refer to such as Burns, Milton, Shakespeare, and even Tennyson; who, writing the most exquisite and accomplished æsthetic poetry, do not seem to limit themselves to the mere vocation of poet, and whose works bear internal evidence of their being men whose vigour shoots out (or might shoot out) in many and various directions. It is Wordsworth's oneness, in fact, which gives somewhat the aspect of photographs to his pictures—pictures done by a *brain-machine*, rather than by the living hand of a glowing soul, alive to beauty, glory, and loveliness in every direction. I really don't know whether I am stating mere prejudice or idiosyncrasy, and not broad and general truth; but of this you must form your own conclusion.'

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* Warrington: June 20, 1863.

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'Mr. Smetham accompanied me to the Isle of Wight, where a little sketching, sea-bathing, and fresh air brought some tone back to my relaxed physique, and closed my brief sojourn. Believe me, there is nothing I should like more than to accompany you, on your sacred pilgrimage¹; but I cannot. I confess to you that I do not like to think of how much that is ennobling, and soothing, I miss; if I do, I strive to console myself with

¹ To the Wordsworth country.

the fact that something must always be missed, and that this is only another unit to that something :

There's somewhat flows to us in life,
But more is taken quite away.

A strange consolation, that a man should console himself for the loss of the cupful with the thought of the fact that he cannot reach the fountain! and yet that is the only one available to me.

'I think I told you that it was Wordsworth who first ushered me into the realm of the poetry of Nature when I was a mere boy. To him I am deeply indebted ; so that in all my generalisations concerning him I reserve the respect and reverence which belongs to everything he did and said. I fully believe the critic's art is detrimental to all true enjoyment, and this makes me very careful of forming merely critical opinions on what is truly excellent and noble. If you go into Cumberland you will understand Wordsworth much better. Find out the lonely hill tarns, the nooks and corners which are only voiceful in solitude, and I think you need scarcely miss a companion.

'The dramatic power, quiet in its vastness and easy in its intensity, possessed by Robert Browning is something wonderful. It is many years since I read his poems. Some of those you mention, however, I recollect as being particular favourites, from which I wrote extracts at the time of reading them. I agree with you that he is finer as a lyrist, or in his picturesque abstractions, than as a writer of well-rounded and

complete drama, but that is due in a great measure to his *power* in the latter direction, which yet lacks the outwardness to make him a Shakespeare.

‘Whilst I enter fully into the importance of your work, its necessity and its results, let me beg of you not to devote yourself too closely to mental labour. Surely God wishes the whole man nourished, physical, moral, intellectual. The loss of health I consider to be a very serious misfortune, and one which we should by all means avoid, if only as a matter of policy.

‘I should be glad to see your letters on Colenso,¹ if you have them in compact form, which you might either bring when you come, or send and I would return them. I really do not think it is worth your while to enter into the controversy at all, or even to allude to it, or think of it. I have found these rules save me from much useless trouble and perplexity. I advise my friends, who confer with me about the book, *to go on, just as if it had not been written.*

‘I have received copies of my portrait from Silvy, for whom I stood when in London. I consider him to be by far the best photographer of all those whose work I have yet seen. His portraits are pictures, and valuable even on that account. I send you prints of the two positions in which I stood, in order that you may keep the one you think most characteristic. . . .

* * * * *

‘In returning from London, I made the acquaintance

¹ A series contributed to *The Dundee Advertiser*, in 1863.

of some truly noble and excellent young ladies, living in Warwickshire—which could scarcely be called acquaintanceship before, as I had only seen one of them for an hour three years ago. She called at our house here one evening, with one of my friends. Accident led us into correspondence, which has been maintained more or less fitfully ever since. In response to frequent invitations I called and spent a night last Wednesday, found an intelligent and characteristic circle of a widow and three daughters, living at a manorial farm-house, hushed and silent in trees and pastures. One of them had been with Mr. Davis, in his recent explorations of ancient Carthage; one, who was married, sang with the skill and feeling of an Albani or a Patti (nay, certainly transcended the latter), whilst the third, who confessed herself to be without a single “accomplishment,” kept the house alive with a force of character scarcely less original and energetic than that of Shirley, who, indeed, appeared no fiction beside her. Good and noble women (young) are so rare that to find such in a natural atmosphere, where friendship may be entered into and fully enjoyed without difficulty or misunderstanding, is a registered event in life, the importance of which can hardly be overrated. Of Dora Greenwell I hear or see nothing, except now and then a fragment in *Good Words*. No doubt she is active enough in some unknown mine, whence she will eventually rise to give her friends greeting and good-bye.’

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‘Warrington : March 25, 1864.

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‘There is no possible “Church” into which you can enter in which you will not have to concede a good deal of personal views and feelings, if you wish to be of any use in that vocation. I am quite convinced for myself that the Christian religion is a progressive one, that the true follower of Christ must act as *He would have acted now* ; not merely following the line and letter of eighteen hundred years ago ; and if you ask me how you are to know under these circumstances what is the right course of action, I cannot say one word more than this, that being Christian you ought to know ; or for what earthly, or super-earthly, purpose was that large “spirit of truth” promised and bestowed ? The Church of England is a large and enlightened Institution ; and, partly through indifference, and partly on account of the number of the best educated—therefore most tolerant—men and women who are in it, is extremely liberal in its religious sentiment. Nevertheless, to a “yearning spirit” that is vivified and vitalised from within, and drinks continually of the wide and deep sea of Truth, feeling the Divine Fire glowing and scintillating around, as he progresses step by step, it may not be wide enough. I fear that almost none of the Churches recognise the Truth unless it be clothed in the old conventionalisms, and sometimes brought down to the level of pagan capacities, hung about with the old phylacteries, Urim and Thummim.

‘But one must recollect that in Religion we are not

called upon to live the life, and work out the views and sentiments, of a hundred years hence ; any more than we are to live civilly and socially as under a system of laws which the world is not yet advanced enough to understand. To be of use in his generation a man must submit to the religious and social forms of his time, *i.e.* if they are not erroneous, but only fall short of the most complete and extended truth. He must accept these, live in them, and work under them, making the best use he can of the material at his command.

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‘But I do not think it is easy to live the right kind of religious life in the broad sense of a teacher, unless there is some certainty as to worldly competence.

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‘I cannot tell you, as one of my friends, with how much weariness I have laboured at an occupation perfectly uncongenial to me for so many years of my life, keeping steadily in view (unless I had married, which would have consecrated and redeemed it perhaps) a final severance from it. The moment has now come when I feel myself perfectly free to choose my occupations, though wealth has been denied me. I have already made arrangements to leave here at midsummer, the beginning of July. I shall probably then spend a few weeks in London, Switzerland, &c., and endeavour to reach Italy before the ensuing winter. I can hardly believe in the near prospect of the object of all my earthly longings: Liberty, Sunshine, Art, Nature, and the power to labour at such Work as I love, without

domination of the external in any way whatsoever. My prospects, however, take a somewhat sober interest from the uncertainty of all human plans, and the unseen shoals that lie along the sea of life. That I have acted, and am acting, rightly in my plans I have not the least shadow of a doubt; and I believe I never shall have, whether they are fully carried out or not.

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‘I ought, perhaps, to say to you that I do not contemplate a perpetual banishment from England; as I always think, if life lasts, I shall ultimately reside in London, which is the most eclectic place in the world.

* * * * *

‘Blake’s illustrations to Blair’s *Grave* are quite wonderful in their power and originality. Some of his works exhibit the surpassing grasp and magnificence of Michael Angelo. . . .

‘Though his drawings are frequently inadequate, his conceptions and the strange weird force with which they are portrayed are almost as far out of the reach of praise as they are of criticism. His illustrations to *The Book of Job*, and to the *Prophetic Books*, you ought to see. By the way, some of his poems in the *Songs of Innocence*, and *Songs of Experience*, are just as remarkable as his designs. Woolner’s *My Beautiful Lady* is a very exquisite poem. I have just finished reading it. There is a passage in it that I have appropriated as mine prospectively :

A world of beauty
Where love moves ever hand in hand with duty,
And life, a long aspiring pilgrimage,
Makes labour but a pastime of delight.

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'I often think the experience of the old Israelites is a type exactly true of the ordinary course of that life which acknowledges the superior guidance and power of the highest laws (or God). Bondage, Struggle, Freedom. All of these, though sometimes failing altogether, are true in the broad, though I have not yet succeeded in establishing a perfect Philosophy of Life in the abstract. Goethe says that "Whatever a man wishes in youth he shall have enough of in old age"; and this is a saying that tends in the same way, having a broad basis of truth, though by no means universally true. May you and I at least find it true to us.

'Thanks for your two papers. I have not heard from Dora Greenwell for many a day. She is one of the most fitful persons I ever knew.

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'If you can get a sight of Gustave Doré's *Illustrations to Dante's Inferno*, do so; as, though some of them are meretricious and of doubtful art, there is great graphic and picturesque power in them as a whole.'

Nearly thirty years later, after many vicissitudes on both sides, the following letters reached me :

'Baycliffe, Lymm, Cheshire: September 13, 1892.

'I reached this place more than a month ago, after a tedious journey, from which, however, I suffered nothing worse than fatigue.

'All I can do is to school myself day by day to submit to the teaching and discipline of life, and in this I have a large faith, though it is difficult to keep such

faith unobscured. Surely there must be something for the soul, so high in its instincts, so far-seeing in its perceptions, beyond the reach and uses of the body, the burden of which at present oppresses me so sorely. If we are born into this world to get rid of the slavery of sense, and all that pertains to the mortal condition, as some creeds direct us to believe, surely it can be no sin to wish and long for that period when we shall lay all wants down, and rest—even if it imply the relinquishing of personality—in larger being. I, for one, fully recognise and accept the Vedantic position that this life is but the gate to Infinite Being, an evolution from the lower to the higher.

* * * * *

‘With your Wordsworth devotion I warmly sympathise. I read him again last winter with increased respect, and love for his fine intuition, his keen spiritual perceptions and elevated wisdom.

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‘By the way, you might think from my allusion to the “Vedantic position” that I am anti-Christian. That is not so. I am Christian indeed, but with a much wider interpretation than is given to Christianity by the “Churches.” It—Christianity—is a Divine and Eternal Voice, but not the only one spoken. *That* has never been silent in the world’s history.’

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‘Lymm, Cheshire : October 21, 1892.

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‘The worst that I have had to endure during my ill-

ness has been a restless nervousness, coming upon me at intervals, which I have not been able to control. It attacks resolution itself at the citadel, so that the power to resist it is crushed.

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'An illness like mine reveals many things to the soul. One is the vast difference between theoretic or unpractised Religion and Philosophy, and experimental. My conclusion is that we learn nothing from theory, and that is the reason why life is so hard a school. Everything of value to us must be a *suffered experience*; otherwise, little or nothing is acquired. All evolution is through suffering, and there is no other mode of advancement and progress. That is my discovery. It explains many things. Perhaps, if we only knew the value of our pains, we should not wish to have them removed; so much as to receive the full benefit and advantage of them.'

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'Baycliffe, Lymm, Cheshire: January 31, 1893.

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'I have been accustomed to the life of cities for many years, so that I find the country somewhat dull. There is nobody here who is at all interested in my own pursuits, and I confess I feel intellectually lost. The nearest city is the county town, Chester. It is an interesting old place, and I have some idea of removing thither. It would at least give me the chance of wider interests, and possibly of some usefulness. The

truth is, I am spoiled for an indifferent and commonplace life. I was the centre of an intellectual circle of remarkable people of high intelligence and attainments in Rome. My illness was marked by a display of warm kindness from the colony of foreigners there, which was one of the most beautiful things in my life. It is one of the mysteries of existence that I should have been flung out of what seemed so exactly my position and vocation, to be cast into a spiritual desert. In my present condition I cannot return. I can only wait, wait, wait.'

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'Lymm, Cheshire: February 7, 1893.

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'I thought of going to Chester from an inward leading. I cannot but think I have been brought from Italy for some ulterior reason not yet apparent. I am longing to be of some use or help to somebody in this world, and had thought that in such a city as Chester I might find something of a vocation. I am pretty well acquainted with Italian literature throughout, and am sufficiently well up in my Dante. I thought I might perhaps gather about me a few studious folks who would be glad to have readings with me in an informal way, either in that or some other direction within my reach. Possibly your promise of an introduction—for which I heartily thank you anyway—to Mrs. Sandford might give me just such an opening as I am wishing for.'

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' 78 Watergate Street, Chester : April 24, 1893.

' I have only read Wordsworth's prose works occasionally and incidentally. It is either my fault, or his, that they have never taken much hold of me. It has always appeared strange to me that form should be, in so many cases, so important an element with many writers. Some time ago Ruskin's poems were sent to me. I was quite disappointed with them. Not a single line impressed itself on my mind. This is altogether unaccountable to me, when the vivid grace and colouring of his prose are remembered, I always feel the same relatively in regard to Wordsworth's prose, compared with his verse.

' Your interest in the *Vedanta* scheme pleases me. I should very much like to inaugurate something from the scientific not "theosophic" (that much abused word !) point of view, and I shall try. My attitude in regard to these writings is that they reveal the primary and fundamental principle of *all* Religion, that this is and always has been the same, and that by penetrating the depths of the soul we find a response to its appeal to-day as clear and distinct as ever it was ; and that this response is the Truth.'

' Chester : January 3, 1895.

' I am deeply glad that you have found anything

congenial in my little book.¹ It contains things I have long wished to say, and I hope it may be helpful to others.

‘The Buddhist says you are to *make* the path you travel, and perhaps that is the reason that we walk so much alone, in order that we may be as self-dependent as possible. Still one misses companionship; for, as Solomon says, “As iron sharpeneth iron, so the face of a man his friend!”’

‘As to your exposition of “Indian Philosophy,” I feel if I were well we might possibly accomplish it together.² I grasp the Oriental essential principles so closely that they are perfectly luminous to me on the whole. But my knowledge of them is not academic; and I do not know Sanscrit, or any Oriental tongue, excepting scraps and words necessary for precision of comprehension.

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‘One of my articles in the *Atlantic Monthly* was on the “Tao” of the Chinese. A former missionary in China for seventeen years, a lecturer on Chinese Religion and Philosophy, wrote to say that I had given the best exposition of the essential principles of Taoism he had ever seen; which was flattering and perhaps true, as there are so few who look upon the Religions and Philosophies of the old world as other than curiosities—

¹ *The Pilgrim of the Infinite.*

² This referred to a series of books on ‘Philosophy in its National Developments,’ which will be referred to in a later volume of *Retrospects*, on Max Müller and others. I had asked Mr. Davies to co-operate.

'Chester: August 12, 1895.

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'I know your life must be often overcrowded. . . . If I interpret your proclivities aright, they would lead you to that condition of "learned leisure" which loves to work without the pressure of haste, leaving you hours of easeful reflection and the orderly adjustment of things. I wish I had such a commodity of *desiderata* to bestow. I would immediately make out to you a sufficiently large grant of the same!

'I forward you my little book of verses of the Long Ago.¹ It is immature in a sense, and there is much in it I should now exclude. Still, I feel its basis is mainly right in principle, and though I would exclude a moiety of what I have written, it is not because I would deprecate the records of a developing age. I have expanded, I hope indefinitely in many directions, since those lines were written; but I feel that it is in a great degree upon foundations there indicated that I have found my bases, and grown. Therefore, as regards myself, I say let it stand. I often think one's early writings should be looked upon in the manner of Novalis. He says:

"I treat my writings as a mental education. They teach me to reflect, and work out my own ideas. That is all I expect from them."

'This is very much the case with myself. It is certainly compensatory for the missing of every other mark.'

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¹ His *Songs of a Wayfarer*.

'Chester: December 11, 1895.

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'I do not regret the lapse of time which brings me nearer to the next stage of being, for I often get heartily weary and tired of this. Yet I try to subdue impatience as far as I am able. "Life is a mystery," says an Italian poet, "which is only explained at its close." I see this, and accept life as educational in the largest sense of the term, and I await its explication. Placed beyond the boundary, the activities and energies of material life, many aspects are revealed to me, which remove me from this sphere, and give me a wider outlook. Such elevated views, or points of view, men for the most part do not gain, or want to gain: but they are there for those whose way leads them thither. Some of them I have found.'

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I think that in William Davies' *Songs of a Wayfarer* there will be found some of the most remarkable minor poems of the nineteenth century. His *Rules of a Right Life*, his poem entitled *May*, his *Goodly Days of Old*, and his sonnets on *Santa Maria dal Fiore at Florence* and on *A Fountain in the Campagna of Rome*, are noteworthy products of a genius that instinctively divined what was beautiful and right.

During his later years, and his retirement at Chester, he was able to a certain extent to revive the work he did so beneficially at Rome, during his prime. He fostered the study of Dante, in a small circle of

devoted persons ; and, with still more delightful results, he founded a small select society for the study of the philosophy of India. Mrs. Sandford, the author of *Thomas Poole and his Friends*, and Judge Hughes, author of *Tom Brown's School Days*, were then living in Chester ; and both of them were deeply interested in William Davies, and his work. Mrs. Sandford in particular attended his weekly readings and expositions of the Vedas and Upanishads. It was noble work done in comparative obscurity, for one of his practical mottoes was 'in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.'

JAMES SMETHAM

JAMES SMETHAM—an original and distinctive artist, a poet, and a remarkable letter-writer—was born at Pateley Bridge, Yorkshire, in 1821. He was a man of singularly beautiful character, touched with the rarest idealism, and was a friend of Ruskin and of Dante Rossetti. Many of his letters were collected, and edited with a prefatory memoir by William Davies—to whom the previous chapter of this book is devoted—in 1892. Those which are issued now have not before been published. In 1854 Mr. Ruskin asked him to write down some particulars of his early years. From this paper I made some extracts. 'I have a distinct remembrance,' he wrote, 'of the ecstasy with which, when at the age of two years, I regarded the distant blueness of the hills, and saw the laurels shake in the wind, and felt it lift my hair.' At the age of fifteen he was articled to Mr. E. J. Willson, Lincoln, who wrote the literary part of Pugin's *Examples of Gothic Architecture*. 'He set me to draw all the figures about the Minster. I spent a grand solitary year at this work. With a key to myself I poked about every corner at all hours, and twice a day heard the organ-music and the choristers' singing roll about among the arches. I sat

on the warm leads of the roof, and looked over the Fens, and dreamed and mused hours away there, and then came down over the arches of the choir, and drew the angels drumming and fiddling in the spandrels. . . . But I fretted my soul, because I wanted to be a painter.' At the end of three years his indentures as architect's clerk were cancelled. 'I was thus thrown on the world by my own act and deed, and with very little practice announced myself in Shropshire as a portrait-painter, getting employment at once; working when I wanted money, strolling to Buildwas and Wenlock and Haighmond Abbeys, scrambling to the top of the Wrekin, and wandering in lane, meadow, and woodland.' At the age of twenty-two he went to London, and entered as a probationer to the Royal Academy, was helped by John Philip and Edward Burne-Jones, who 'told him not to be anxious, for in or out of the Academy he would succeed.' The death of a brother greatly unhinged him. 'My spirit followed him. I perceived that to attain to him was not a matter of fancy or speculation, and "the commandment" came to me. A complete upheaval and chaos of my inward life followed, and I fell into the "Slough of Despond." The beauty of Nature mocked me, my fancies became ghosts. I felt my discordances with the spiritual truisms, and it was not till my father also died' (he was a Wesleyan minister) 'that my soul was stilled, and set in order.' . . . 'A salutary fear shut me up in a happy seclusion, and I could not precipitate myself into the battle of life; so I went on painting portraits, and interspersing them with fancy pictures, gaining

money enough to keep me, and then snatching a month or two for study ; now in a large town, now in a little one, now in a remote farm painting the farmer and his family, roaming in his fields and by the edge of his plantations ; then in London.'

Smetham not only practised the art of painting, but carried on a study of the poets, especially of Tennyson, and made many delightful marginal illustrations on the edition which he used—that of 1843. This effort to combine the study of Literature with devotion to practical philanthropy, and artistic labour, gave an ethereality and ideality to his work ; but it did not lead to conventional success, or 'getting on' in his vocation. However, in 1861 he wrote :

'In my own secret heart I look on myself as one who *has* got on, and got to his goal, as one who has got something a thousand times better than a fortune, more real, more inward, less in the power of others, less variable, more immortal, more eternal ; as one whose feet are on a rock, his goings established, with a new song in his mouth, and joy on his head.'

It was eleven years before this, in 1851, when he settled in London, that he became teacher of drawing to the students of the (Methodist) Normal College, Westminster. This afforded him a frugal livelihood, but it was necessary to add to it ; and, as he did not succeed in the sale of larger pictures, he formed the plan of etching his smaller designs, and 'issuing them quarterly to subscribers.' Six hundred subscribed ; but

he altered his plan, issuing instead a small oil or water-colour sketch annually to each member of a circle of forty, for which he charged only three guineas at first; afterwards, when the size was greater and the work more elaborate, nine guineas. As allegorical sketches these were admirable, felicitous in design, often brilliant in colour, and some of them symbolic of his own life. Many won the praise of Ruskin, of G. F. Watts, and of Dante Rossetti. With the last he formed a strong friendship, spending every Wednesday in his studio, painting during the day, seeing friends in the evening, and remaining till next morning. After his death, Rossetti wrote of his pictures to his widow. They 'have delighted and astonished me by their extreme beauty. Indeed they are, in colour, sentiment, and nobility of thought, only to be classed with the very flower of modern art.'

Mr. Davies' brief *Memoir* of his friend must be consulted for a singularly just estimate of his character with its 'intellectual beauty strangely attractive,' his conversational powers, the literary endowments of one to whom books were

a substantial world, both pure and good,

the 'atmosphere of subtle intellectualism' in which he breathed, and his life-long devotion to the good of others.

I transcribe parts of six letters to me, belonging to the years 1863, 1864, and 1865 :

'1 Park Lane, Stoke Newington : September 6, 1863.

* * * * *

'It gives me great satisfaction to find that there are

elements in my volume of *Etchings* which give you, and your friends, any pleasure or profit. They were published among a circle, on the whole, not quite what I could have desired, but they have in some instances found their way a little outside that circle into a few hands in which I would wish them to be placed. I tried to express in the preface some idea of their aim, as compared with completer works; but, when it is necessary to do this, it is often also futile. Since their publication I have found (as I think) an agent for pictorial expression much more complete, and certainly much less laborious. I cannot do better than enclose a circular which, so far as I have had time to send it out has been successful in its object.

* * * * *

‘The “Studies” named in it bear the same relation to designs that etchings do, with the very important addition of the element of colour; and, as they are produced in a twentieth of the time, they afford a much more ample field for the expression of what Blake used to call “Inventions.”

* * * * *

‘It is seldom that I find enough genuine interest in Art to provoke expression; and it is a joy to meet with anyone who, being drawn to it by mental fitness, has also right views of its moral relations. On the whole I have lived in a lonely land, in regard to what Art has been to me, and what I think it ought to be to man. Mr. Davies may have told you that I am a Methodist, and I can tell you that I am well content to be

one; but I have to deplore that to be at once artist and methodist is a puzzling position in the Universe, which it would take much palaver to explain with sufficient clearness and pathos.'

* * * * *

' 1 Park Lane, Stoke Newington, N.: March 9, 1864.

'Within the last few weeks I have been able to resume the cherished scheme of which I sent you an account; and the more I think of it, and carry it out, the more sure I am that I have at last discovered my *vocation*, a point of the utmost importance to have settled in any man's life, and bringing great comfort when it is found. I finished my large picture about Christmas, and shall be in no hurry to do any more such work, considering that in the same time I might have embodied fifty separate ideas able to be dispersed to fifty different centres of influence.

'I wish that you could look over what I have done. A good many are already sold, but for a few days I shall have about twenty by me, framed and ready; and it is important that a variety of them should be seen to catch the right idea of what I am setting before me.

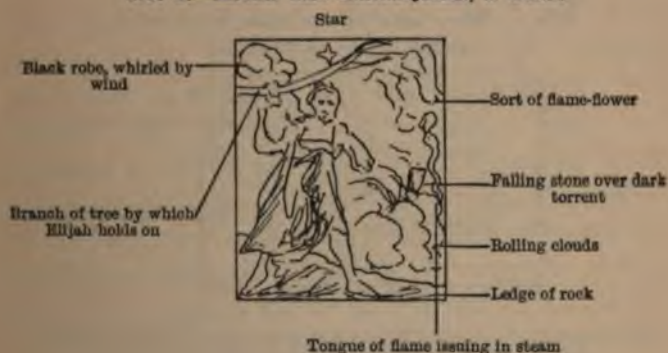
'However, you can't jump from Dundee into my studio; so I must be content to inform you that I have two or three scriptural subjects among them, which I fancy you would like.'

[It is impossible adequately to reproduce the drawings which followed. The letter-press description can be given and rough outline sketches.]

No. 1.—EZEKIEL BY CHEBAR.



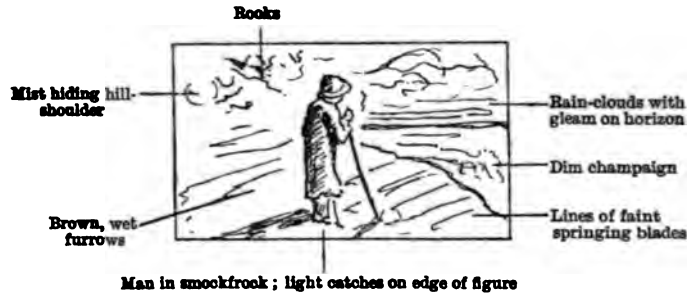
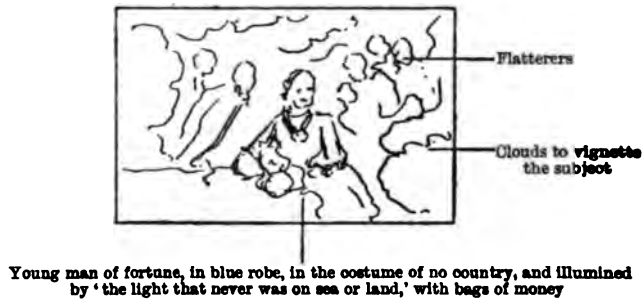
No. 2.—AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE, A FIRE.



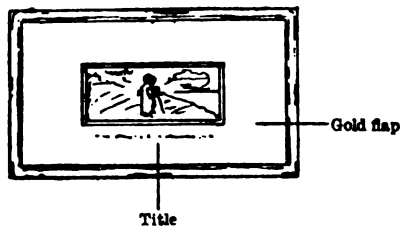
No. 3.—JABBOK.



No. 4.—THE HUSBANDMAN HATH LONG PATIENCE.

No. 5.—MEN WILL PRAISE THEE WHEN THOU
DOST WELL TO THYSELF.

No. 6.—



' 1 Park Lane, Stoke Newington, N.: April 1, 1864.

' I have been from home a good deal, endeavouring to put store into the storehouse; either by taking my sketch-book, and rambling by farms and gardens, and in lanes and fields; or in note-making at a most important exhibition now open of all the works of Mulready. Many of his pictures are the property of the nation; these I can study at any time; but many of his best works are not likely to be brought together again in a hurry, and it is desirable to work hard at them with this recollection in view. One room is devoted to his paintings; not numerous, but unspeakably elaborate, and perfect in execution. Another room is full of the sketches and drawings made for them. These, to a professor of the art, are enchanting. I suppose it is not possible to share the delight it gives to have before you, at one view, the key to a man's mental processes in a department where you yourself are a worker. "However did the man do this?" is the natural exclamation on the sight of a work finished such as his are. Here the veil is drawn aside, and you see that, like

all the Muse's heavenly lays,
With toil of spirit it is dearly bought.

' The first hesitating notes are struck with pen and ink, in a sketch two inches long, on an old envelope scrap. This is taken up in a higher mood on another larger scrap, and has a touch of shading in it. Then it is enlarged to six inches, and a vague general effect of composition and posture is realised, and you feel that

the man has hold of his idea. He proceeds to do a coloured sketch in oil, or water-colour; and at this stage he abandons fancy, and turns to Nature, drawing each part—hand, foot, elbow, knee—direct from life, with unwearied care; sometimes resuming all these studies in one large black-and-red chalk drawing, as a Cartoon. Then he steals touch by touch on his canvas, or panel, into the life of the finished subject. It would be well if the youth of eighteen, who is so impatient of toil, could see these heavy discounts which have to be paid before the riches of the palette are realised.

‘There is no touch of mere “cleverness” about these strong men. If you examine any of these pen-and-ink drawings you find them composed of five or six separate pieces of paper—pasted or inserted—where the “relish” of the subject has been lost; and a bit the size of a sixpence is pasted where a head has not “come,” as it ought to do. So you have no wasted labour. Your tyro, if he make a blunder, gives all up in despair, burns his paper, gives himself the trouble to begin again, and tires with failure. Your generalissimo says, “How much of this will do? Where is the blunder? Let me repair just that, and no more. Life is too precious to afford to throw a touch away.” It is not on a superficial observation that you see evidence of these re-considerations. The sketch looks happy and free. You think he “hit it off,” but he didn’t.

‘I am much obliged by the photograph, which will be prized by me, and put into an album where I intend to have my “forty” enshrined, so that I may consider

for three guineas each. To remedy this I have tried the following plan :

'1. Spend a week or two in thinking out a subject elaborately in water-colours for the portfolio.

'2. When say half a dozen subjects are ready, trace or sketch, or show them (which is best of all); and out of this half-dozen let all the subscribers make their choice. Only the same subject should not, if possible, be repeated more than six times, and should be distributed, so as not to clash in the same circle of friends or neighbours. In each replica there would be some slight variation of the theme, making it entirely original. In this way each subscriber would be sure of something of the best quality possible in the circumstances.

'3. Use the subject on a larger canvas as a picture, if need be.

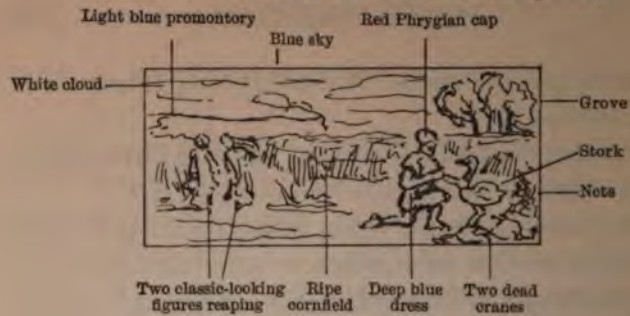
'The subjects I have thought of I will describe to you.

No. 1.—PETER SAID, 'I GO A FISHING.'

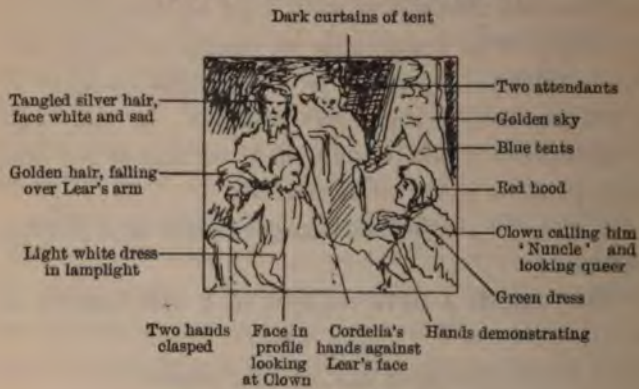
Peter, reddish hair, russet dress



No. 2.—THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE STORK (*Æsop*).



No. 3.—LEAR, CORDELIA, CLOWN.



No. 4—EVENTIDE.



"Or by the light thy words disclose
 Watch Time's full river as it flows,
 Scanning thy gracious Providence
 Where not too deep for mortal sense."

Keble's Evening Hymn.

(Colour deep and sombre, with points of bright light on stems, roots, creepers, &c. May be a scene in a primitive forest, and the monk may be St. Francis Xavier.)

'On the whole I am inclined to suggest that No. 4 would be most likely to suit you best. I look upon it as one of the most thorough things I have designed, and I have spent much thought upon it. I fancy there is an amount of soothing quieting influence about the general tone of it, that would serve your turn as well as anything I could send you, though if it does not take your fancy I have plenty of other material.

* * * * *

'I think your views as to remaining in your own Church are likely to be correct.¹ "As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place." And unless there be very vital differences of opinion it is unwise to enter on new associations either of business or religion. It is only by very slow degrees that the best influences take root. A man's influence depends so much on protracted good example, and this not only requires time, but time before the same audience. A man may suddenly shoot down an alley, and be lost to view out of the thoroughfare

¹ This referred to a proposal to take Anglican orders, then being considered.

where he is known and recognised. Then again in any Church the individual finds much that is not to his taste, has to put up with a good deal, and it takes years to lose the vexatious sense of antagonism. I believe also that in cases of change there is antagonism two ways. Unless the new comer is very quiet, his peculiarities vex the community he enters. Even if he is quiet, he says "sibbolet" instead of "shibboleth," and he is rather suspected. Very different is the case of a convert from the world to the Church. The Church is glad to teach him, and he has everything to learn, and usually leans to the Church that was made the instrument of his conversion.

'Still there are cases where change has been made without detriment, possibly with advantage. I know Methodists who have become Dissenters, and Dissenters who have become Methodists, and Methodists who have become Churchmen, and some Church people who have become Methodists. For myself, I don't much believe in Evangelical Alliances. True Christians can't but love one another, while for the work of life a little clannishness gives zest and pungency. I find very Catholic people wanting in practical intensity; and, considering that the days of our years are only three-score and ten, and that there is much to be done, and that we are not as a rule Admirable Crichtons, it is probably best for each man and Church to find his (and its) own "line of things ready to hand," and then do it with might.

'The most useful men I know are those who work away in one direction, and have a touch of dislike for

those who think differently. The rule is surely this, that each man should "be himself," should take up the point or points in which he is unquestionably strong, and make the most of those points ; going on, and never minding what other people think about what he does, so long as he does not offend against laws applicable to all. With all the good wishes of the season when "no planet strikes, no witch hath power to harm," yours &c.'

* * * *

' 1 Park Lane, Stoke Newington, N.: May 23, 1865.

* * * *

'It is one of my great regrets that all very serious Art is dreadfully dependent on money, and that with the best will in the world a man can't boast much of the perfection of work at three guineas. Still I am most thankful that, as studies, this medium of utterance is open to me ; and that, in a profession extremely hard to make a source of support, they wonderfully simplify the question of finance, and pave the way to better things. Nay, I should be well content myself to do plenty of studies themselves—believing as I do that suggestion, and not mere imitation, is one of the highest functions of Art—if there were sufficient intelligence in the public to make them generally acceptable ; which I fear there is not, as the history of William Blake shows.'

* * * *

As in the case of his friend William Davies, James Smetham had a place among the minor poets of England. He did not write much verse, but the majority who

read his *Retrospection*, his *Oblivion*, and *The Single Wish*, will desire that he had written more. I quote a sonnet, a copy of which I received soon after it was written, entitled *An Antidote to Care* :

Think that the grass upon thy grave is green ;
Think that thou seest thine own empty chair,
The empty garments thou wast wont to wear,
The empty room where long thy haunt hath been.
Think that the lane, the meadow, and the wood
And mountain summit feel thy foot no more,
Nor the loud thoroughfares, nor sounding shore ;
All mere blank space where thou thyself hast stood.
And 'mid the thought-created silence say
To thy stripped soul, What am I now ? and where ?
Then turn, and face the petty narrowing care
That hath been burdening thee for many a day,
And it will die, as dies a wailing breeze
Lost in the solemn roar of boundless seas.

WHITWELL ELWIN

THE Rev. Whitwell Elwin was for fifty years the rector of Booton in Norfolk, and editor of the *Quarterly Review* from 1854 to 1867. He was the friend of many notable literary Englishmen, including Brougham, Lockhart, Croker, Macaulay, Thackeray, and John Forster; and his reminiscences of them were extremely interesting to his friends. Few men were more intimately acquainted with the literature of the eighteenth century (as his articles on Cowper, Sterne, Fielding, Goldsmith, and Johnson show); but he knew the nineteenth century nearly as well, particularly Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Scott. His knowledge of Science, History, and Art was also wide. He had a remarkable memory of all that he ever got to know. His edition of Pope is well known; and—with his introductions to the *Poems*, the *Essay on Criticism*, the *Rape of the Lock*, and the *Essay on Man*—it is the standard one. Croker had begun it, but accomplished little. Elwin edited five volumes, and then gave it up, Mr. Courthope concluding it. Elwin also wrote a life of John Forster. He seldom left Booton except to go up to Town, when editor of the *Quarterly*. He was devoted to his parish, where his genial ways,

his constant kindness to parishioners, his humour and urbanity, made him a favourite with everyone.

There is an interesting sketch of him by Thackeray, in one of his 'Roundabout Papers.' He laboured for many years at the restoration and beautifying of his Church, declining every offer made him to accept a more valuable living. Booton Church is now one of the most perfect specimens of Perpendicular Gothic in the county of Norfolk. It has two towers, admirable stained glass windows, and carved oaken seats: the flints in the face of the outside walls, with delicate stone pilasters running across, are most picturesque; the bosses on the roof represent angels, with lamps hanging from them; and all is Mr. Elwin's reconstruction. It is a memorial of twenty years' work, work regularly paid for by him as it proceeded, so that from first to last no debt was incurred. Not far off is a school, built of bricks made and burnt close at hand, all under the direction of the rector.

Mr. Elwin's conversation was most picturesque and varied. We talked much of Wordsworth; and he once recited to me, with as richly musical a voice and as deep a pathos as I ever heard, the Abbotsford sonnet on the departure of Sir Walter for Naples, dwelling especially on the lines,

the might

Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes;
Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue
Than sceptered king or laurelled conqueror knows,
Follow this wondrous Potentate.

He died as he was dressing, on new-year's day morning, 1900. As Wordsworth says, of the Grasmere pastor,

like a shadow thrown
Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,
Death fell on him ;

or, as Samuel Johnson put it, in lines which Elwin often quoted :

Then with no throb of fiery pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way.

The following are extracts from Mr. Elwin's letters to me :

* Booton Rectory, Norwich : January 1, 1894.

'I was not acquainted with either Wordsworth or Coleridge ; and much as I have heard about them from others, I am sorry that I can do little to satisfy any expectations our friend may have raised in you. Here, however, is an extract from a letter written by Lockhart to myself, which I think may be of use to you :

* " November 22, 1852.

" " One of the last nights I met W. W. was at Miss Rogers's, close by me here. In the evening she had a bevy of young beauties, and both he and Sam were a little excited. As the girls, and one especially, were retiring, the two poets, Sydney Smith, and I, observed them from the fireside of the outer room. ' Ah,' said Sam, ' what an advantage *we* have ! In a few years all these fair creatures will be withered, and their youth—which is the worth of their sex—gone ; whereas we are to the last almost as good as we ever were.' W. W. surveyed him from top to toe, and bowing to the ground,

said in a whisper not to be forgotten, 'Speak for yourself, bard of Memory.' Grand was Sydney's roar, and the banker slunk away visibly demolished.

"I think it was the very day after that, being quite accidentally at Highgate with a friend, it occurred to me to go into the Church, and see what monument had been raised to Coleridge. Behold! W. W. and his wife were in the church for the same purpose. My friend took Mrs. Wordsworth into his carriage, and W. W. and I walked across the fields to this park,¹ he lodging at Miss Rogers's, next door to me. He had on a former occasion told me many painful stories about Coleridge.

* * * * *

"But now his strain was very different. He spoke with profound admiration, respect, and regret, and seemed to consider him as having passed his latter years in pious penitence that should obliterate all errors."

'With reference to the anecdote in the first of these two paragraphs it may be needful, if you print it, to remind a new generation, who never saw Rogers, that rather early in life he had a strong resemblance to a corpse, a theme for numerous jests, and grew more ghastly in advanced age. It was this that gave point to Wordsworth's preliminary survey of him from top to toe, followed by the burlesque bow, and the ironical "Speak for yourself," in mockery of the Bard's vaunt, when his outward appearance was in such ludicrous contradiction to it. . . . All the accounts I got of Coleridge from

¹ To Sussex Place, in the Regent's Park.

those who knew him before his final asylum with Gillman agreed in this—that he was destitute of self-control, and that on the slightest incentive he gave himself up to self-indulgence. . . . With his profligacies, his reckless improvidence, his utter want of consideration for everyone but himself, there must have been seasons when, having exhausted the endurance of his staunchest friends, they must have kept him at a distance, and treated him with coldness. You may be sure that Wordsworth, as well as Southey, had his share in the trial, and it shows, it seems to me, his nobility of feeling that when the scene was closed he should have passed over the whole of Coleridge's criminal aberrations—for they were nothing less—and dwelt solely upon his great gifts, his high principles, often as they had broken down in practice, and his final repentance and reformation.'

* * * * *

'In the *Quarterly Review*, vol. xcii. No. 184, p. 227, there is a paragraph commencing "Wordsworth was about five feet ten inches in height," and ending "widely as his name." The article was not written by Lockhart, but I have his authority for stating that the whole of this paragraph was from his editorial pen. It appears to me a concise and vivid summary of Wordsworth's appearance, manners, and style of conversation, and the value of the portrait is greatly increased when it is known to come from an eminent and shrewd observer, who had seen Wordsworth under varied circumstances—at Abbotsford, at Rydal Mount, in London society—and

who had the faculty of setting down traits with the same precision that he noted them. Nor can the character be suspected of partiality, for while Lockhart could not but do homage to Wordsworth's genius, and enter into the spirit and power of much of his poetry, he was not among the number of his uncompromising admirers.'

* * * *

'Glancing over Lockhart's letters I find this passage :

"W. W. recited verse in a sonorous style almost like song. So did Coleridge and Wilson. Who began it I cannot say—probably S. T. C., who did it far the best, having a finer ear for music of every sort."

'In allusion to Wordsworth's alleged fondness for repeating his own poetry, Lockhart says that he has no recollection of his having obtruded it; but in another letter (July 9, 1852) he gives an instance of Wordsworth's preference for listening—amidst a wealth of books—to what he himself had written :

"I remember once, perhaps thirty years ago, W. W. at Abbotsford pleaded his weak eyes as a reason for not joining Sir Walter Scott, and others, in some ride, and remained at home with only Miss Wordsworth, his daughter. On returning after four or five hours, we found him in the same attitude we had left him at the fireside in the library, and the lady reading to him *The Excursion* !"

'When De Quincey resided at the Lakes, Wordsworth was friendly with him, and Lockhart says it was "merely to be near Wordsworth that Wilson bought his pretty little estate on Windermere." It was Lockhart's

impression that, while both Wilson and De Quincey retained their admiration of the poet, both ended by disliking the man. *The fault was probably with themselves.* I have a letter of Lockhart's giving a sketch of De Quincey's career, and from this it is evident that his habits for many years of his middle life must have compelled Wordsworth to drop him; as it did Lockhart himself, which sufficiently explains De Quincey's sourness. Wilson's change of feeling may be suspected to have proceeded in like manner from Wordsworth's distaste for some tricks he played upon him, which may have passed with Wilson for jests, but to Wordsworth seemed insults.

'You will observe that Lockhart, in his characterisation of Wordsworth, speaks of the vivacity of his conversation, and of his ability to cope in wit with the greatest masters in the art, among whom he mentioned to me Sydney Smith and Rogers. I fancy this trait has been a good deal overlooked by most of those who have written of him. His playful rebuke to Rogers's personal vanity is itself a specimen of the vein of fun there was in him. I have seen it remarked that there was no humour in Wordsworth's verse; which, if it were true, would be no evidence that it was not in the man; but I myself think that there is both humour and poetry in *The Idiot Boy*.

* * * * *

'I am a recluse, and live out of the way of new publications, so that I am behindhand in my knowledge of some subjects, in which my interest is greatest.

I shall endeavour to repair my backwardness in respect to Wordsworth, and send you a supplement to this letter.'

* * * *

' Booton Rectory, Norwich : February, 1894.

'I am delighted to hear that you will be coming our way in summer. A mere call will be no good. Unless you bring your portmanteau and stay, you will not be welcome. . . . We shall have plenty to talk about.

'Dyce, the editor of Shakespeare, saw much of Wordsworth in his visits to London. He was accustomed to Boswellise, and he took down fragments of Wordsworth's conversation, most of which he published in the notes to his *Table Talk of Samuel Rogers*. He intended that the remainder should be published also, but some are trivial, and I have copied the few that seem worth preserving on a separate sheet of paper. So far as I know they have never been printed. John Forster, the author of the *Life of Oliver Goldsmith*, *Life of Dickens*, &c., was Dyce's literary executor, and I was one of Forster's; and it is in this way that Dyce's manuscript has come into my hands.

* * * *

'Dyce was a very exact man, and he says he can vouch for the accuracy of his report of Wordsworth's talk. It was Dyce's chief defect that he was apt to concentrate his attention on petty details. He had a refined taste in poetry, but seldom got beyond verbal criticism.'

* * * *

' Booton Rectory, Norwich : December 7, 1894.

' The widow of John Forster, who wrote the *Life of Goldsmith*, died a few months ago, and the whole of his papers have passed into the hands of his executors, of whom I am one. In going over his voluminous correspondence, I have just come upon a letter to him from Mrs. Gaskell, the novelist, dated Ambleside, October 28, 1852, and I transcribe from it the passage which follows :

" We dined quietly and early with Mrs. Wordsworth on Monday. She is charming. She told us some homely tender details of her early married days, how Miss Wordsworth made the bread, and got dinner ready, and Mrs. W. nursed all the morning, and, leaving the servant to wash up after dinner, the three set out on their long walks, carrying all the babes amongst them ; and certain spots are memorial places to Mrs. W. in her old age, because there she sat, and nursed this or that darling. The walks they took were something surprising to our degenerate minds. To get news of the French Revolution they used to walk up the Raise¹ for miles, in stormy winter evenings to meet the mail. One day when they were living at Grasmere (no post-office there) Wordsworth walked over to Ambleside (more than four miles) to post some poem that was to be included in a volume just being printed. After dinner as he sat meditating, he became dissatisfied with one line, and grew so restless over the thought that towards bedtime he declared he must go to Ambleside and alter it ; for

¹ Dunmail Raise.

‘in those days postage was very heavy, and we were obliged to be very prudent.’ So he and Miss Wordsworth set off after nine o’clock, walked to Ambleside, knocked up the post-office people, asked for a candle, got the letter out of the box, sent the good people to bed again, and sat in the little parlour, ‘puzzling and puzzling till they got the line right’; when they replaced the letter, put out the candle, and softly stole forth, and walked home in the winter midnight.

“It is curious the loving reverence she retains for Coleridge, in spite of his rousing the house about one in the morning, after her confinement, when quiet was particularly enjoined, to ask for eggs and bacon! and similar vagaries.”

* * * * *

‘I do not remember that this incident of the night-walk, to alter the defective line, has been told in print. It is a good example of the enormous pains Wordsworth took with his poetry. Nor do I recollect that the long walks of the poet, his wife, and sister, carrying the nursery with them, have ever appeared in this precise form, as an instance of the passionate love of all three for out-door life, and for scenery.’

* * * * *

The following are extracts from Dyce’s fragments of Wordsworth’s conversation, still in MS., given me by Mr. Elwin :

“I should like very well to reside in London during several months of the year, but I cannot say that I relish the short visits I pay to it; during which I live in a

constant bustle, breakfasting and dining out every day, and keeping much later hours than suit my habits. I delight in the walks about London, to which no one—no poet at least—has done justice. How charming is the walk along the Serpentine! There is no nobler view in London than that of Cheapside, and the rise of Ludgate Hill. To me the streets present objects of great picturesqueness. Even a butcher's shop by candlelight, with its varieties of colour, light and shade, is very striking."

"The pleasure I derive from Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, which I have perhaps vainly endeavoured to express in parts of my poetry, is only second to the pleasure which I derive from Nature."

"When I compose a poem, I generally begin with the most striking and prominent part; and if I feel pleased with my execution of that, I then proceed to fill up the other parts."

"In writing poetical descriptions of natural objects, it is better not to write them on the spot; because, if you do, you will enter into a great deal of unnecessary detail. You should write just after the object is removed from your sight, and then its great features only will remain impressed upon your mind."

"I may add that in talking with Aubrey de Vere, Wordsworth blamed Walter Scott for adopting the opposite method.

"In Dr. Wordsworth's *Memoirs* of his uncle there are two letters from Wordsworth to Dyce, in which he

speaks of his wish to publish a selection from Thomson's poems. In the second of them (see *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 219) he hesitates, from a doubt whether it is becoming for one poet to dismember the works of another. His final decision appears in Dyce's fragments of his talk, and it may be worth while to print the passage in a note to the letter. He said, in conversation with Mr. Dyce:

“I have given up my intention of publishing a selection from Thomson's works (poems and plays) because I think I ought not to treat so distinguished a poet in that manner. I have the most ardent admiration, and profound respect, for Thomson. I doubt if any poet since Milton has shown so much poetic feeling. Parts of *The Castle of Indolence* are divine. I say nothing of his taste, and Burns had more passion.”

‘I copy a passage from Dyce's MS. touching Dora Wordsworth's marriage with Quillinan: “Dora, the darling of her parents, married the late Mr. Edward Quillinan, a gentleman who published sundry clever things, both in verse and prose.¹ In spite of his high esteem for Quillinan, who looked up to him with all the reverence of a votary, Wordsworth had long objected to this marriage with great earnestness, firstly because Quillinan was a widower with two daughters; secondly, because he was a Roman Catholic; and thirdly, because

¹ See *Poems by Edward Quillinan. With a Memoir by William Johnston.* ‘I knew Quillinan well, and it was in his house in Bryanston Street that I first saw Wordsworth.’ (Dyce.)

he was poor, and had incurred the most serious liabilities in consequence of his connection with the Brydges family, his first wife having been a daughter of Sir Egerton Brydges. Wordsworth, however, at last ceased to oppose the marriage, which took place in 1841, nor could there possibly have been a happier union." "

* * * * *

ANNA SWANWICK

MISS SWANWICK'S memoir has recently been written by her niece, Miss Mary Bruce. The following chapter is meant to be a supplement, although most of it was written before her biography appeared. Throughout her long life the dominant notes, from first to last, were consistently those of graciousness, ideality, radiance, and unselfish versatility. There have been few women in the nineteenth century from whom flowed such an uninterrupted stream of elevating influence. From every interview with that indomitable spirit in its fragile body one came away much clearer in insight, greatly widened in sympathy, and fuller of hope for the future of mankind.

From her early childhood in Liverpool Miss Swanwick's interest in Literature, and in every kind of educational and social movement, was great. She often spoke of her introduction to Literature by her mother. At the age of four she could repeat long passages of *L'Allegro*. The education of girls was then very meagre and formal; and Anna Swanwick, fighting her own way upward, was one of the noble pioneers of their higher education. At the age of eighteen she

received a great impetus through an initiation into Philosophy and Mathematics by Dr. Martineau. She visited the Lake District of England, where she saw Wordsworth, and began the study of Greek and German. Intensely eager to learn, and unable to gratify her desire in England, she went to Berlin; where she lived with the scholar Zumpt. In his house, and at classes, she commenced the study of Hebrew, as well as of Greek through the medium of German. In six months she acquired a complete knowledge of German, and was studying Kant, Fichte, and Schleiermacher; while she had mastered Greek, so far as to read Plato with delight. The record of these six months is a wonderful disclosure both of character and capacity; as her letters, then written, show.

On her return to England she made some masterly translations from Goethe and Schiller, the firstfruits being *Iphigenia*, with parts of *Torquato Tasso*, which were published in 1843. Her translation of Schiller's *Jungfrau von Orleans* was issued in 1847, and Goethe's *Egmont* in 1850. After the *Iphigenia* appeared, she was asked by Mr. Bohn to translate *Faust* into English; the first part of which was published in 1851, but the second not till 1879. I think I may venture to say that this ranks as one of the best translations of Goethe's great poem in any language; and it at once made her widely known in the literary world. So highly did Baron Bunsen esteem it that he begged her to turn her thoughts, for a similar purpose, to the Greek tragedians. She did so; and, after much thought, determined to undertake the

translation of the dramas of Æschylus. To this work she devoted the best years of her life. It brought her reputation, and her society was sought by men and women famous in the realms of Literature, Art, and Politics; but it was her remarkable personality that attracted them, and made them friends.

A near relative, Mrs. Russell Swanwick, has sent me the following memorandum:¹ 'In looking back on her long and noble life one is more and more struck by the roundness and richness of her nature. She was full of interests, all of which blended; no one part of her suffering from the cultivation of another. A striking feature in her character was her intense power of concentration. Gifted with a mind of rare quality, it was masculine in its power of grappling with intellectual difficulty. She brought to the work of translation an almost religious enthusiasm. To render the dramas of the master poet (as she felt him to be) into equivalent English was for the time being the absorbing work of her life. Both word and spirit had to be reproduced in the most perfect way. So scrupulous was she that sometimes a phrase, or a sentence, would be pondered for a week till what she considered the right rendering was found. She could not brook second-rate work, and this spirit animated her to the last. When eighty years of age she revised her translations, not only of the Æschylean Trilogy, but also of the two parts of

¹ Many of these memoranda are included in the *Memoir* compiled by Miss Bruce; but there they have a different setting from the form they took when they were written down for me, at an earlier date.

Faust, a task which few would have had the courage to undertake. In each case she found improvement possible. Whatever its literary merit, and that is great, there never was more truly honest work.

'Her power of concentration enabled her to grasp the leading points in any book, article in a review, or the news of the day, with remarkable rapidity and exactness. By some alembic of her own she managed to extract the ore. She never read in a careless or desultory fashion, but made everything her own as she went along. This gave richness to her mind, and precision to her speech; and what she acquired she never forgot. As her interests were very wide, her sympathy was overflowing; and she always felt that it was more blessed to give than to receive. It was these things that made her so unique, and gave such a charm to her society. Then her absence of self-consciousness, the sincerity and winning graciousness of her manner, drew out an assuring sincerity from all who met her. Superficiality dropped away, and the conversation in her drawing-room or at her dinner-table was wholly different from ordinary "society talk." Her trained and polished intellect met the man of letters, the man of science, and the politician, each on his own ground, as an equal; and she generally led the conversation, which could be as deep and earnest as it was at other times brilliant and witty, flashes of fun and repartee alternating with grave discussions.

'Poetry was a part of her being, which vibrated in harmony with all that was true and good; but hers was

no sentimental appreciation, her poetical judgment being always virile and strong. As in Philosophy she was never carried away by the mere beauty of a system, in poetry she was quick to detect every piece which had a *falsetto* note, and to put it aside. Then, united with her gentle nature was the most manly love of freedom, of liberty and independence, and a profound hatred of all oppression tyranny and wrong. Her eye would flash with indignation at the recital of any tale of unrighteousness or cruelty. Of a deeply religious nature, she was the pupil, and life-long friend, of Dr. Martineau. With him she faced the great questions of the ages, and probing philosophic doubt came back with a humble faith, very simple, and most catholic; while the discoveries of Science were a revelation to her not only of eternal law, but of the law of the Eternal.'

Men and women have been grouped as 'Light Givers,' 'Light Reflectors,' and 'Light Absorbers.' It is a good classification. The first are the rarest, and amongst them was Anna Swanwick.

Miss Swanwick often spoke of her great love throughout life for wild flowers. She had more joy in them, she said to me, than in those reared in garden ground; and a sort of friendship, or at least a subtle sympathy and affinity, with them. Her father used to call her 'Flora' because of this. 'But,' said she, 'however much we may love them when young, we can only really appreciate them when we are old. In youth so much draws our attention away from what we love, we are in such haste

to be *doing* things ; but when, instead of this, we are either compelled, or induced, to look quietly on Nature, we get away from ourselves, and the beauty of the flowers grows upon us, whether we see them by the wayside or in the "crannied wall." She could spend much time in absolute solitude, if only she had flowers around her. She referred to Keats's love for them in his last days, and quoted his words, 'I *feel* the flowers growing over me,' and then Browning's

Roses shall bloom, nor want beholders,
Sprung from the ground where our own flesh moulders.

She was always ready to speak of her work amongst the poor, and unbefriended ; her classes for girls employed in shops, &c. Once when she was trying to interest these girls in Milton, someone suggested that instruction in Arithmetic would be more useful, considering their work, and their future. She thought not, but said she would leave it to themselves to decide. So, at their next meeting she put the question to them, 'which do you prefer, instruction in the poets, or in book-keeping?' and, not to hasten their decision, left them to discuss it amongst themselves, telling them that she would come back for their answer. When she returned she found that only two of the girls were in favour of what bore upon their ordinary work ; all the rest wished what would take them away from it, or lift them above it. Years afterwards, when all teaching was given up, on account of age and illness, her maid announced that a woman wished to see her, but could not come into the house, as

she had an infant in a perambulator. On going to the door Miss Swanwick found an ex-pupil come to thank her for having been 'taught to see the Beautiful, for now she was teaching the same to her child.'

She often referred to the innate courtesy, kindness, and good taste of some of the very poorest women she had known. 'Befriend them,' she said 'and their gratitude will flow to you, like water from a well.' She mentioned a poor cripple whose sole joy was a print of one of Raphael's Madonnas she had given him, which consoled him during many a sad and lonely day. 'He thanked me,' she said, 'for my words and my smiles.'

Turning back to her literary work, she often spoke to me of the difficulties which every conscientious translator felt in getting the fittest equivalent term in another language to express not only the meaning of particular words and phrases, but the drift or tendency, and above all the literary flavour and charm, of the original. The literal translation of language was impossible, because no two phrases, even in the same language, were synonymous; and what was needed by one who knew no language but his or her own was not bald literality, but equivalence, which was another thing. She said to me (what her niece has emphasised) that when engaged in the translation of *Faust* and *Æschylus*, she was sometimes occupied for days in the search for the best equivalent English word, and an expression satisfactory to herself. Vague resemblance was not enough, nor a general verisimilitude. We must make as near an approach as possible to identity

of phrase. And yet, she said, such is the harmony of speech—and the solidarity of thought—that a translation has sometimes been better than the original which gave rise to it. If that cannot be said of her own version of *Æschylus*, it may perhaps be affirmed that she has done more than anyone else to popularise the Greek poet to many of his readers in England.

Her conversation almost always came round to the great poets and thinkers, living or dead. Her reminiscences of those she had known were most varied, and singularly vivid. To meet them round her table was specially interesting. Before she knew him so well as in after-years, she sat next to Browning somewhere at dinner; and told me that, after having kept everyone present in constant merriment by his brilliant wit, he turned to her during a storm of laughter, and said in an undertone, 'Do you like lizards?' She went on laughing, not at the sallies which had convulsed the company, but at this new question. Browning continued, 'I love them for the changefulness of their colours, and their being able to return again to what they were! It is a protective arrangement, but they must surely have a sense of humour in it all.'

She once said to me, 'I have had a very blessed life. I only wish it had been fuller of blessing to others. It's no use people telling me what I have done for them, when I've done almost nothing worth doing. But, as I have given up long ago thinking of the many gracious "might-have-beens" for myself, I don't dwell on the

"lost possibilities" for others. What good does it do to think of these things in our old age, when there are millions of new possibilities for others ripening all around us, while we are talking of our failures! I like to get up, and work; rather than sit still, and dream. Don't you think the habit of brooding over losses, and even of lamenting unrealised ideals, may put a drag on our energy in work? But I do not despise these lamentations of good people, who have been both thinkers and workers. A sad retrospect may sometimes be a sign of the greatness of human nature, and of its coming destiny. You know what our dear poet says:

There shall never be one lost good;

and I like that splendid phrase,

What is our failure here but a *triumph's evidence*
For the fulness of the days?

Someone has said that there is a harmony of opposites in what Browning teaches, and I think it is true. I like to be, with him, a

Plucker of amaranths grown beneath God's eye
In gracious twilights where his chosen lie;

and yet I think I know

Each sting that bids not sit nor stand, but go.

Don't you think that a magnificent stanza?

He fixed thee mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

Her numerous friendships with eminent contemporaries were well-known facts, and many persons saw their influence. The versatility of her accomplishments was both a cause, and an effect, of these friendships. Distinguished classical scholars, such as Sir Richard Jebb, the Master of Trinity, Professor Newman, and others have written in high praise of her *Æschylus*; others, such as Sir Theodore Martin and Professor Dowden, in equal terms of her *Faust*. Tennyson and Browning appreciated her, so did Mr. Gladstone, Max Müller, Colenso, and Dean Stanley. She had met Carlyle, Kingsley, Maurice, Crabb Robinson, and W. B. Carpenter. George Macdonald, Frances Power Cobbe, Lady Martin, Mrs. Pfeiffer, Oliver Wendell Holmes, the late Marquis of Bute, and Mr. Lecky were amongst her friends.

Perhaps her most characteristic book was one evolved from a lecture. It was published in 1892, and called *Poets the Interpreters of their Age*; but I need not tarry to describe it. Time would fail me to tell of her varied travels, her joyous humour, and the story-telling powers of this ever bright cheery and indomitable spirit. Her intellect was as nimble-witted, as her heart was gracious and gay. Her varied enthusiasms were contagious, and her alert unpretending tactful ways as a hostess were the delight of all her friends. She knew 'when to keep silence and when to speak.' She was an excellent talker, and an admirable listener; her refinement was so placid, and her reverence had a spring within it which lifted others up.

Her work in the cause of women's education was that of a noble and undaunted pioneer. She was one of the founders of Bedford College, in London; and one of her last public acts was to attend, and preside at, its Jubilee.

Two characteristic things I must mention in conclusion. One is as follows. All her acquaintances knew her immense appreciation of Milton, and her delight in *Comus*; but her friend Mr. Wicksteed tells us he was present at a conversation in which Professor Newman and she took part. Her old friend and instructor 'pointed out what he thought was a drawback to the moral efficiency of the poem. Miss Swanwick's eye flashed, and she assumed the air of one defending the impeached honour of a dear friend. Passage after passage from *Comus* rushed to her lips, and a defiant challenge was thrown in from time to time, till her hearers were fairly carried away by the sweep and torrent of her vindication.' And her protagonist was no less a scholar and thinker than Francis W. Newman.

Another relates to her first and last speech in public. Her first was when she was sixty years of age, at a meeting in London on behalf of women's suffrage. It was thus reported at the time: 'The speech of the evening was delivered by Miss Swanwick, who had never spoken on a platform before, and never made a public speech in her life. It was admirably reasoned, and delivered with a tender, touching, womanly grace

which kept the audience silent while she spoke, but brought thunders of applause when she sat down. She concluded with these words: "On the battlefield of life, where the powers of evil and of good are arrayed for mortal combat, the forces which are needed are not physical but spiritual, not stalwart limbs but strong hearts and powerful brains; and in these women are not deficient. Give them a sound practical education, remove their social and political disabilities; and in their energy and sympathy, their conscientiousness and tenderness, we shall, I believe, have a reservoir of power, which will lift this great nation to a higher level of social and political life." No nobler words have been ever spoken on the subject of the education of women.

Her last speech was at the unveiling of the portrait of a friend. In the course of her remarks, she said:

'I cannot but regard poetry as the highest gift of Heaven to man, giving as it does permanent expression to the loftiest emotions of which we are capable; while its ideal creations, transmitted from generation to generation, bear witness to the continuity of humanity, and foster the sentiments of brotherhood. The desire to read the mysteries of the human heart, as revealed through poetry, is common to all, high and low, rich and poor; and thus it may become an invaluable means of bridging over the wide interval that separates them in life. Having had large classes both of working-men and working-women, I can speak from experience of their having found no subject so acceptable as poetry; the works of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, and many other

master-minds, having been thoroughly appreciated by them.

‘The poet, moreover, besides revealing the mysteries of the human heart, transports us, by the power of imagination, into the presence of Nature, and interprets for us the mystic characters therein inscribed. This, in my judgment, was the special function of Wordsworth, who, in the varied aspects of Nature, recognised a “Presence that disturbed him with the joy of elevated thoughts,” in other words the presence of that God who, through the marvellous beauty of the universe, is for ever drawing us to Himself. I remember hearing the late Lord Selborne say that, with the exception of the Bible, he knew none but the poets, who from Homer to Browning had been, to such an extent as they, the spiritual teachers of humanity.’

That bright, elastic, indomitable spirit of hers—its wonderful grace mingled with its *verve*, its reticence associated with an unconquerable *élan*—is gone. Her fragile body was almost too slight and delicate a shell for the ever-burning spirit to live in. We shall not see her any more, but her memory lives, and her works do follow her.

The following are a few of Miss Swanwick's letters. I had sent her the copy of a translation of Goethe's lines descriptive of the poet's function, and, having forgotten the context, asked her where in *Torquato*

Tasso (as I thought) it was. The lines were as follows :

Wherewith subdues he human spirits ?
 Wherewith makes he the elements obey ?
 Is't not the stream of song that out his bosom springs,
 And to his heart the world back-coiling brings ?

She replied, in two letters, thus :

' 9 St. James's Square, Bath : November 17, 1892.

* * * * *

'The original of the passage to which you refer is not from Goethe's *Torquato Tasso*, but from his *Faust*, and is to be found in The Prologue for the Theatre ; it forms part of the poet's beautiful description of the god-like power wielded by the bard, which he characterises as " Man's loftiest right, kind Nature's high bequest."

'The following is my translation of the lines in question, which, however unworthy of the original, is certainly less objectionable than that which you quote, and which I regret to hear has been attributed to me :

Whence comes his mastery o'er the human breast ?
 Whence o'er the elements his sway ?
 But from the harmony that, gushing from his soul,
 Draws back into his heart the wondrous whole ? '

* * * * *

' St. James's Square, Bath : November 21, 1892.

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'I am at present engaged in revising my translation of *Faust*, which was originally published upwards of forty years ago.

'The entire passage, setting forth the function of

the poet, to a portion of which you alluded in your last letter, is so beautiful that, as heralding my little volume on *Poets and Poetry*, I feel tempted to send you my translation of it, which I accordingly transcribe.'¹

* * * *

When engaged in the work of examining and writing about the portraits of Wordsworth and his household, I called on Mrs. Gertrude Lewis, introduced to her by Miss Swanwick, to see a small portrait in oil of Mrs. Wordsworth, said to be by Miss Gillies who painted the poet so often. This portrait, which is now in Dove Cottage, Grasmere, hung in Miss Gillies' studio at Hampstead for many years. She always spoke of it as that of 'old Mrs. Wordsworth,' and on the back of it is an inscription evidently put on by her when sending it to the Royal Academy: 'No. 1. Portrait of Mrs. Wordsworth.' Mrs. Lewis allowed me to have this miniature etched for one of my volumes of Wordsworth, and afterwards gave the original for preservation in the poet's cottage at Grasmere. A question arose as to the identity of the portrait, but this need not now be discussed, and it is only mentioned to explain allusions in Miss Swanwick's letter.

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' 23 Cumberland Terrace: December 12, 1893.

* * * *

'Mrs. Lewis is quite willing that her portrait of Mrs. Wordsworth should be etched for the forthcoming

It is too long to quote here in full, but will be found in her *Faust*.

edition of the poet's works ; her doubt is whether the lady whom it represents *is* the poet's wife. I was so fearful lest I should not accurately represent her views that I requested her to write to you herself, which she promised to do. [Mrs. Lewis at once wrote on the subject.]

'The countenance of Mrs. Wordsworth as portrayed by Miss Gillies is so interesting that it may well represent in advanced life the charming creature to whom the poet addressed his lines, "She was a phantom of delight," &c. I hope you may feel satisfied that such is the case.

'Though in bygone years I have seen Wordsworth, I was never introduced to him ; and my friends, who had the privilege of knowing him, have now passed away. I fear, therefore, that I cannot add anything by way of reminiscence. I am tempted, however, to mention one circumstance, related to me by my old friend Mr. Crabb Robinson—a devoted disciple and admirer—which is interesting as indicating how genuinely he appreciated and admired in the poetry of another the qualities characteristic of his own genius.

'Wordsworth was accustomed, as told me by Mr. Robinson, to walk up and down the room, with his hands behind his back, muttering his own verses. What more natural when he was revising his text ? One day Mr. Robinson heard him repeating, in the same low tone, Mrs. Barbauld's well-known lines upon *Life*, a copy of which I will enclose. When he came to the end he muttered : "I should like to have written that. I should

like to have written that." He could not have paid Mrs. Barbauld a greater compliment.¹

'I am delighted to hear of the proposed new edition of Wordsworth's works, in poetry and prose; as indicating the deeper hold which they are gaining on the public mind, with their elevating influence.'

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' 23 Cumberland Terrace: February 12, 1894.

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'I was much interested to learn from Mrs. G. Lewis that during Wordsworth's walks with Miss Gillies, when she was his guest, he was in the habit of reciting—evidently with great enjoyment—passages from the Greek poets. His poems I confess—even when, like *Laodamia*, founded upon classical subjects—do not appear to me to be imbued with the classical spirit. I was therefore surprised—and the feeling would, I think, be shared by others of the poet's admirers—to learn that

¹ The lines are as follows:

'Life! I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we met,
I own to me's a secret yet.

Life! we have been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, or tear;

Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time,
Say not Good-Night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good-Morning.'

his love for the poetry of Hellas found such unequivocal expression as its recitation for his own enjoyment during his daily walks.

‘I was reminded of my last visit to Aldworth, when, while walking through his grounds with Tennyson, after expatiating upon the magnificent roll of the Greek verse, he recited—in illustration of his remark, and with the greatest enthusiasm—a long passage from Homer.

‘It is interesting to consider this bond of sympathy between two of our great poets of the nineteenth century.’

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J. HENRY SHORTHOUSE

A MEMOIR of the author of *John Inglesant* is being written by his widow, but Mrs. Shorthouse has allowed me to include in this book any of his letters which seem illustrative of opinion and character.

In December 1880 I happened to be lecturing on Spinoza, to the Birmingham and Midland Institute, and met Mr. Shorthouse at the residence of my host. Our talk was mainly on Plato, Spinoza, and Wordsworth; and a good deal of our subsequent correspondence referred to these three great writers. He had joined our 'Wordsworth Society' at its formation, and I suggested to him the preparation of a paper on 'The Platonism of Wordsworth,' specially apropos of the two books of *The Excursion*—'Despondency' and 'Despondency Corrected'—and the great *Ode, Intimations of Immortality*. He liked the idea, and gradually wrought it out. As he could not read it to the Society, it was published in Birmingham, first privately in quarto form, and afterwards in octavo for the public. It was subsequently included in our *Transactions*.

When the Society held its third meeting in London, the year in which Lord Coleridge was President, the

Chief Justice invited the members to an evening reception at Sussex Square. Mr. Shorthouse was one of an interesting company who were present. *John Inglesant* had by this time—partly through Mr. Gladstone's eulogy of it, mainly from its intrinsic merit—become famous. It was 'the book of the hour,' universally talked of; and everyone wished to meet, or be introduced to, its author. It was a rather trying ordeal that had to be gone through; as, although Mr. Shorthouse had a picturesque countenance and a highly intellectual expression, he had a stammer. There is a kind of stammering which detracts from the significance of speech, and mars it. There is another which enhances it, gives it charm and piquancy, and makes it even more distinctive than the even onward flow of talk. The latter was Mr. Shorthouse's. His face irradiated by a smile or lit up by laughter, his slender right hand drawn gracefully down his beard; his whole frame quickly responsive to the thought or feeling in the sentences he uttered, no one could ever wish that the peculiarity, which is generally a defect, should in his case cease. But, at a great reception, when a crowd of people surround or stand near a distinguished man, all wishing to be introduced, and the sentence spoken to one not being finished before another requests the favour of presentation, it soon became a trial of endurance. Mrs. Pfeiffer spoke to him of Greece, Mrs. Eastlake of Florence, and Lord Houghton of Keats; till he said to me, 'I cannot talk any more; I see Mr. Arnold has gone, and I must follow.'

But it was in his own home—Lansdowne, at Edgbaston—that his conversation was richest, most varied, and stimulating. Whether in his library, or walking in the terraced garden he loved so well, its range was wide, its perspective singularly clear, and its outlook prescient. He never dogmatised; but by light strokes of a steel which was always within reach he struck out many a spark of light from the dry flint of other people's talk. In those days, and for years afterwards, I never passed through Birmingham without calling at two places, the Oratory and Lansdowne; and the one was as interesting as the other.

John Inglesant rapidly attracted the attention, and won the regard, of the thoughtful readers of romance. The photograph of Mr. Gladstone asleep in a bower at Hawarden, with the book which he had been reading for hours resting on his knee, was much in demand. The real cause of the book's success—and it won what was far better than popularity—was both its subject-matter, and the manner of its treatment. It attracted reflective readers, who were interested in the questions of Philosophy and Religion, as well as in the analysis of character, in historic incident, and in descriptions of scenery. As it dealt, not with passing phases of thought and feeling, but with permanent problems—the questions of the ages—it came in to stay; and it remains a possession to many thoughtful men and women, in England and America.

In its descriptive passages realism and idealism are finely blended. Many persons think of Little Gidding

as a place which they have known and visited, although they have never been there; and the descriptions of Florence, though not so realistic as those in *Romola*, are certainly quite as remarkable, having been written by one who never visited it, and—so far as I know—was never out of England. The inner affinity between the aim of Mr. Shorthouse in *John Inglesant*, and the lifelong endeavour of Matthew Arnold, comes out in a sentence in one of the following letters: 'The main intent of my book is to exalt culture against fanaticism of every kind.'

I remember his intense interest in a small English book, written by a German workman and printed in Germany, called *The Textuary of the Pine-Wood*. It had reached him from the Continent in a mass of packing around some goods; and though written by one who was only learning the English language, it was full of the quaintest and daintiest phrases, natural, archaic, and fresh as the woods it described.

The quiet beauty of the life at Edgbaston will be told in the Memoir which is being written. Those who have been his guests, and know the house and its garden-ground, can never forget the host who was so unostentatious, and quite unspoiled by success. The city of Birmingham may well be proud that such a man was born and worked within it, and that he combined a business career with a life devoted to culture. His name, in the capital city of the Midlands, will be associated with those of Priestley, Darwin, Dawson, Naden, and others who have given distinction to it.

The following are a selection from his letters received by me. Others have been sent to Mrs. Shorthouse.

'Lansdowne, Edgbaston: December 1, 1880.

'The very pleasant evening I spent in your company on Monday last has made me wish to request your acceptance of a volume of Philosophical Romance, of which work I have printed a few copies, mostly for private circulation. I enclose a review which has appeared in the *Athenæum*, by which you will see that the reviewer was rather oppressed by the work (a single copy was sent out by the provincial bookseller with no introduction), and my only hesitation in sending it to you arises from the knowledge I have that your time must be so fully occupied that I doubt whether the book is of sufficient interest to justify the spending of time over it.

* * * * *

'I purchased the first edition of *The Excursion* you told me of. It is a nice clean copy in the original boards. Are the lines in the preface part of the unpublished MS. which exists of *The Recluse*? If there are more like them, the sooner the MS. is given to the world the better.

'If I can at any future time get any ideas put upon paper concerning Wordsworth's Platonism I will do so, *but it is no child's play*. It will be necessary to concentrate the essence of Wordsworth's teaching (in the whole of his works), as regards the effect of material law (Nature) upon intellectual Existence, by which it appears

he conceived of absolute Being, but which as a system he has, *I think*, left somewhat vague; and, on the other hand, it will be necessary to formulate Platonism, which has never yet been satisfactorily done, and the requisites of which Jowett has utterly failed even to perceive. And Grote, as it seems to me, was—as an interpreter of Plato—like a blind man writing upon colour; but admirable so far as his perceptions went. Shall I present a copy of my book to your Library, and then no one need read more than he likes?’

* * * * *

‘Lansdowne, Edgbaston : December 7, 1880.

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‘I have forwarded the book to you by rail to-day. You will find many misprints in it, as I revised all the proofs myself. Indeed I consider this edition in the light of a proof itself. I am reading Pollock’s *Spinoza* with great interest, and thank you for introducing me to the book. I have not got far in the philosophical part, but what I have read is very lucid and charming. I shall look out for your book eagerly.

‘Your suggestion with regard to an essay on Wordsworth’s Platonism is a very tempting one, but I cannot think myself equal to such an undertaking. I will see what I can do; and, if I find myself getting on at all, I will let you know.

* * * * *

‘The main intent of my book is to exalt culture against fanaticism of every kind. But I flatter myself

I have not unduly intruded the moral, as few readers have perceived it, without my pointing it out.'

* * * * *

'Lansdowne, Edgbaston : February 8, 1881.

'I send by this post a paper upon Wordsworth's Platonism for you to look at. I do not know whether it is anything like what you think the subject requires. . . . It would be easy, of course, to say much more upon Platonism, but this does not seem to me to be what is wanted. If more could be said upon the subject as seen by Wordsworth, it would be much more desirable. It might be possible to trace somewhat of Platonic meaning in the lyrical poems, but the success would, I think, be rather that of ingenuity than of reality. The question, "Was Wordsworth a Christian?" will perhaps some day be asked, and answered, with useful results; at present, and at least before the "Wordsworth Society," it would not be a suitable inquiry.

'The unexpected attack he makes upon Voltaire has always struck me as worth notice. It can scarcely be explained by considering it as merely in accordance with the Wanderer's character. Apropos of Mr. Frederick Pollock's suggestion of traces of Spinoza's influence, I should suggest some of the last lines I quote as a motto for Spinoza :

Unswerving shall we move as if impelled
By strict necessity along the path
Of order and of good.'

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June 2, 1883.

"You are perfectly at liberty to make any use of my paper you like, to read it at the meeting, or take any other course you think most likely to promote what alone we all have at heart, viz. the study and appreciation of the greatest post-philosopher of any age or literature."

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Lansdowne, Edgbaston: August 2, 1883.

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"I have been thinking a good deal upon the subject of my paper, as I have commenced my annual study of *The Excursion*, and I am more and more impressed with the possibilities which a perfect analysis of the poem would open in the direction of Platonic Thought. I sincerely think little of my paper, which in fact consists mostly of quotation, but the least thing may set people thinking upon a subject, and I should be very pleased to elicit the opinion of competent thinkers on the lines laid down in the paper on the synthesis of matter and thought as each was suggested to Wordsworth's mind.

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"P.S. The suggestion of the subject in your own book makes it the more fit that you should take it up."

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Lansdowne, Edgbaston: September 24, 1883.

"The paper Miss Beale alludes to is one called *An Apologue*, in the July number of the *Nineteenth*

Century. It is a little *jeu d'esprit*, which I think contains the germ of a good deal of stiff writing.

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'I asked Mrs. Owen why she omitted from her essay the last verse (on Death) in the *Elegiac Stanzas addressed to Sir George Beaumont, upon the death of his Sister-in-law*. This has led to an interesting question as to the meaning of the verse, whether the hope relates to a future state, or to the result of Death upon our own feelings.'

* Lansdowne, Edgbaston : December 6, 1881.

'I have to thank you very much for your letter, and for your kindness in telling me so much of the way *John Inglesant* has been received among your friends. It is, as you well say, delightful to learn that anything that you have written has been a help to such as you describe. I can only suppose that it is that I have been so happy as to become, for a moment, the mouthpiece of one or other of those eternal truths, of that *καλὴς ᾠδῆς*, that sweet song, which, coming down through the generations, as Plato says, from the harp of divine love, is caught up now and again, by one and another, who is but the string upon which the notes are played. It is enough surely, for any man, to have carried on even for an instant and in the feeblest way such wonderful song. One of the most pleasing things about the book is, I think, the way it seems to have appealed to such different conditions of mind: the persons of whom you speak, Mr. Gladstone, Professor Huxley, and Mr.

Frederick Pollock on the one hand, and on the other boys of no hitherto suspected taste for Literature, who have read the book with an eagerness which has surprised their friends.

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'Anything I can do¹ is indeed little compared with the unspeakable benefit and delight I have for many years found in the poet's works.'

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'Lansdowne, Edgbaston : March 27, 1882.

'I am very sorry to hear that you cannot find the book.² I know how miserable it makes me, when I am in a similar trouble. Very often they turn up in a wonderful manner, so that you cannot imagine where they can have been ; sometimes, however, they never turn up ! Then, the only consolation is that you have been over all your books, refreshed your memory of them, found out where they all are, and perhaps discovered something that may be of use immediately, which otherwise you would have missed. This is the only consolation I can offer ; I *never lend* certain books under any pretence.

'I do not think that I agree with your plan of keeping the Church collects separate from the others.³ I think the combination gives life and interest ; and, if the others are good, does not jar.'

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¹ This refers to his paper on *The Platonism of Wordsworth*, for the Society's Transactions.

² It was *The Textuary of the Pine-Wood*.

³ In *Home Prayers* (Blackwood, 1881).

'Lansdowne, Edgbaston: January 25, 1886.

'Many thanks for your lecture.¹ We have read it, both aloud and to ourselves (my wife and I), and are delighted with it. It is so exactly what is wanted for the girls (and boys too for that matter) of the modern education. I wish that you could read it here, in some of our "high schools."

'Your lecture seems to me to be a link in the Lampadephoria of the old faith, passed on to the new generation, without which the new learning and systems will be nothing but *ignes fatui*.

'I was very much pleased with the new Wordsworth numbers, and proud to find myself in such good company. I was particularly delighted with Rawnsley's paper; it seems to me to be a distinct effort of genius, and to give us a real and new insight into Wordsworth's personality.'

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'Lansdowne, Edgbaston: November 23, 1886.

'I cannot tell you how grateful I am for the remarkable unbroken unanimity of kindly and generous sympathy and appreciation which I received from Scotland. This was the case from the very first, and now day after day brings me papers from every part of Scotland full of the same sympathy. All these reviews have the impress of the literary excellence for which Scotland has always been famous. One from Dundee this morning, for instance, speaks of the "quaint fervour" of Simeon, a most perfect epithet.'

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¹ On 'The Higher Education of Women.'

*Lansdowne, Edgbaston: December 17, 1888.

'I feel as though I ought to write you a line to congratulate you and to thank you for having given us *The Recluse*, which I have just read, and re-read. I think that you once told me that you had often urged its publication without success. I think it is much to be regretted that it was not published before; but this only makes the debt we owe you the greater. It seems to me purely and perfectly Wordsworthian from the first word to the last: that is, we have all that we expect of Wordsworth at his best; but more than this even, it seems to me to be Wordsworth himself, in a sense more revealed and unveiled than in any other lines of his. How completely self-revealing and how true, for instance, are the (to me) most touching lines (pp. 44-5)

Yet to me I feel
That an internal brightness is vouchsafed
That must not die, that must not pass away;

and

Possessions have I that are solely mine,
Something within which yet is shared by none,
Something which power and effort may impart.

'We seem to see here the *officina*, the Poet being made; and we thank God, and—under God—Dorothy Wordsworth, that, unlike others of his age and circle, he was enabled to rise above the delightful indolence of sweet thought and dreams, by "power" and "effort," aided—and how loyally none will ever fully know in this world—by his sister.

A voice shall speak, and what will be the theme?
I would impart it, I would spread it wide;
Immortal in the world which is to come.

‘We have in this poem an answer to what many have questioned, how Wordsworth really regarded the peasantry around him; and his lines on his sister, read in connection with those on *Tintern Abbey*, would alone make this poem indispensable.

‘I think he never wrote more beautiful ones than those at p. 48.

But me hath Nature tamed, and bade to seek
Far other agitations, or be calm;
Hath dealt with me as with a turbulent stream,
Some nursling of the mountains which she leads
Through quiet meadows, after he has learnt
His strength, and had his triumph and his joy,
His desperate course of tumult and of glee.
That which in stealth by Nature was performed
Hath Reason sanctioned; her deliberate Voice
Hath said; be mild and cleave to gentle things
Thy glory and thy happiness be there.
Nor fear, though thou confide in me, a want
Of aspirations that have been—of foes
To wrestle with, and victory to complete,
Bounds to be leapt, darkness to be explored;
All that inflamed thy infant heart, the love,
The longing, the contempt, the undaunted quest,
All shall survive, though changed their office, all
Shall live, it is not in their power to die.

‘The whole poem, indeed, tempts one to quote. The description of the valley at the beginning seems to surpass those in *The Excursion*. It is fresher and more brilliant, also what is said of the flight of birds (p. 14).

‘Some lines I can fancy Charles Lamb noticing, of that weird kind that he always liked, and which is a

distinct feature not perhaps always noticed in Wordsworth :

Like a hound
Single at chase among the lonely woods
His yell repeating ;

(p. 22) ; or (p. 23) :

That very voice, which, in some timid mood
Of superstitious fancy, might have seemed
Awful as ever stray demoniac uttered,
His steps to govern in the wilderness.

‘I hope I have not wearied you out of measure, but I felt that something must be said to thank you for your share in this, as it seems to me, most important epoch-marking publication in our Wordsworth life.’

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‘Lansdowne, Edgbaston : June 4, 1890.

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‘I have never felt the slightest interest in such places as Shakespeare’s and Wordsworth’s houses, &c.’¹ The interest in, and the places to study a writer, seem to me to be his books. . . . The surroundings of such homes and places necessarily change so much that nothing of the original tone and feeling remains.’

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‘Lansdowne, Edgbaston : November 15, 1891.

‘I am very much obliged to you for your book, which I found here on our return from Devonshire, where we have been spending a month.

¹ See Mr. Ruskin’s remarks on this subject, in the Second Series of these Retrospects.

‘I have only been able at present to read your preface and introduction ; they both interest me exceedingly. In fact no subject has been for years a matter of deeper puzzle to me than the nature of The Beautiful, and I shall follow your historical account of the inquiry with very great interest. I see with great satisfaction that you promise us a “constructive theory” to follow by-and-by. I am particularly struck by the pertinence of your remarks, on pp. ix and x of the preface, on the positive (or creative) theory rather than that of the negative. Your words seem to me extremely valuable, and I should be most glad to see them carried forward, as they no doubt will be, in your further work.

‘I am also very much struck with a remark on p. 24 with reference to Plato, in whose writings there is a great deal of detached and very stimulating thought about Beauty, although no consistent theory of it is reached.

‘I have been reading a good deal of Plato lately, and this sentence strikes me as being marvellously true of his method and attainment *as a whole*.

‘P.S. Since I wrote this I have read some more pages, with an astonishing increase of delight.’

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‘Lansdowne, Edgbaston : January 10, 1893.

‘. . . I now hardly ever attend lectures. They are mostly quasi-scientific or illustrated lectures, with lime-light photographs and other attractions to a very large

audience. The literary lectures of our youth seem to be either scarce or not popular.'

It is difficult to state in a few sentences in what the charm of *John Inglesant* consists. It is not an ordinary tale, not a society sketch; nor is it an historical novel, or a philosophical romance. Perhaps its uniqueness lies in this. It is the record of a grave and solemn quest for that in which the heart of man may find repose, and may experience it with superabounding evidence of its reality; not merely seek for it, but *obtain* it as well. He does not find it in Books, or Institutions—much as these are valued, and utilised—but, in the fellowship of a life that endures, while the former may change. To represent it as written to embody any special truth, or teaching, is nearly as great a mistake as to imagine that Shakespeare wrote his plays with an ethical purpose primarily in view. So many great works have been described—and accurately described—as a search for the *summum bonum*, or the 'way to the blessed life,' while the paths taken and the guide-posts set up have been very various, that it may not be the most exact method of characterising any of them; but I may hazard the following, by way of comparison.

I once asked a somewhat famous artist, successfully devoted both to landscape and figure painting, and who had spent most of his time in Holland, what was his ideal of landscape beauty. 'Ah,' said he, 'I am an amateur of the Repose! It is the Repose I like to paint.' Certainly Mr. Shorthouse, in *John Inglesant*, was 'an

amateur of the Repose,' in the sense in which my artist-friend defined it. With him, as with the poet whom he knew and loved so well, it was most true that

The moving accident was not his trade,
To freeze the blood he had no ready arts,

and it is the very subject-matter of his chief romance that gives it its distinctive character. It is so great, so elevated, so enduring that the goodly company of varied characters to whom we are introduced raises its 'high argument' sometimes to a level with, and sometimes above, that of Scott; however far the literary art, and charm, may fall below those of Sir Walter.

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